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VOL. XVII NO. 16 NEW YORK, SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 12, 1938 TEN CENTS A COPY

ARISTOCRATIC REBELS *By Bertrand Russell*

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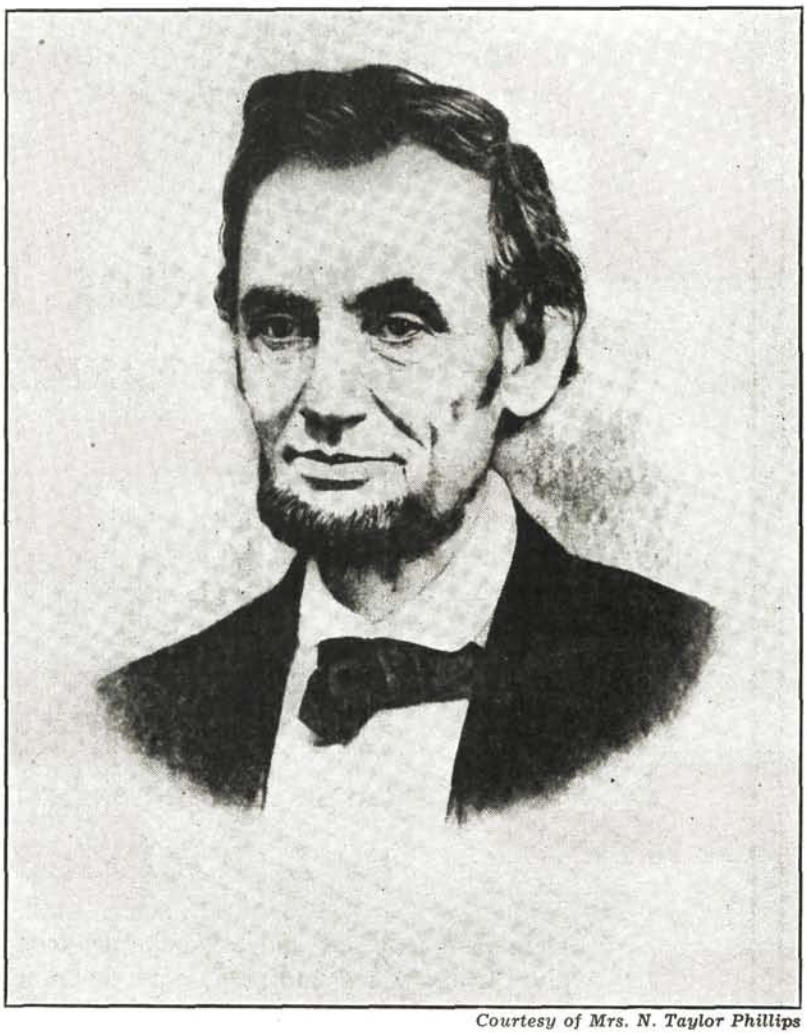

Courtesy of Mrs. N. Taylor Phillips

A seldom reproduced photograph of Lincoln, taken by A. Gardner two weeks before the assassination. (From "The Hidden Lincoln.")

"The great, keen, shrewd, boring, patient, philosophic, critical, and remorselessly searching world . . . will find out all things, and bring them to light, and the question is now: who shall do that—a man's friends or his enemies?" . . .

(See page 5)

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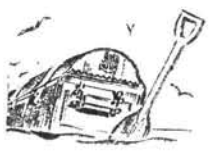

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By FLANNERY LEWIS

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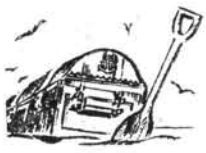

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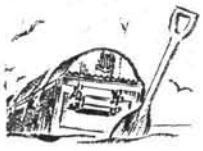

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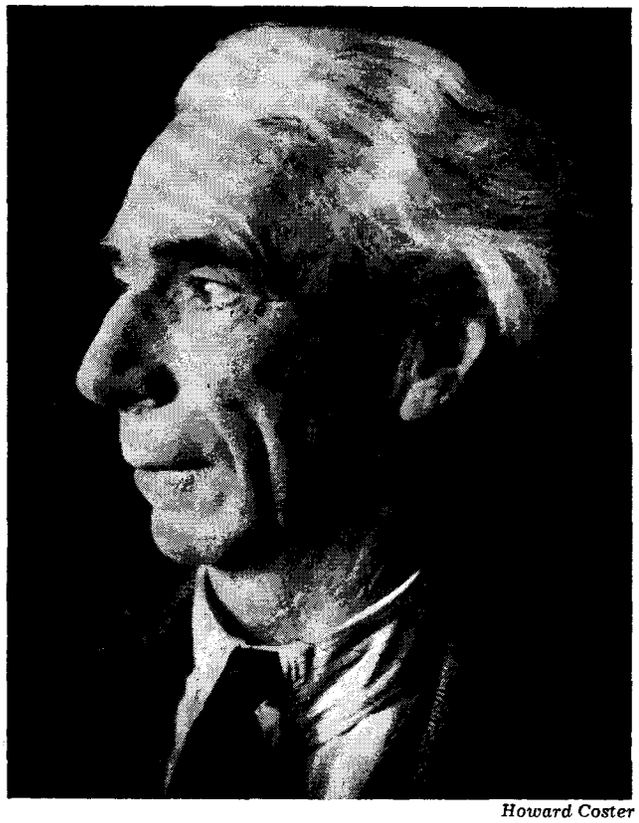
Aristocratic Rebels

Byron and the Modern World

BY BERTRAND RUSSELL



Howard Coster

BERTRAND RUSSELL

THE nineteenth century, in comparison with the present age, appears rational, progressive, and satisfied; yet the opposite qualities of our time were possessed by many of the most remarkable men during the epoch of liberal optimism. When we consider men, not as artists or discoverers, not as sympathetic or antipathetic to our own tastes, but as forces, as causes of change in the social structure, in judgments of value, or in intellectual outlook, we find that the course of events in recent times has necessitated much readjustment in our estimates, making some men less important than they had seemed, and others more so. Among those whose importance is greater than it seemed, I shall maintain that Byron deserves a high place. On the Continent, such a view would not appear surprising, but in the English-speaking world it may be thought strange. It was on the Continent that Byron was influential, and it is not in England that his spiritual progeny is to be sought. To most of us, his verse seems often poor and his sentiment often tawdry, but abroad his way of feeling and his outlook on life were transmitted and developed and transmuted until they became so widespread as to be factors in great events.

The aristocratic rebel, of whom Byron was in his day the exemplar, is a very different type from the leader of a peasant or proletarian revolt. Those who are hungry have no need of an elaborate philosophy to stimulate or excuse discontent, and anything of the kind appears to them merely an amusement of the idle rich. They want what others have, not some intangible and metaphysical good. Though they may preach Christian love, as the medieval communist rebels did, their real reasons for doing so are very simple: that the lack of it in the rich and powerful causes the sufferings of the poor, and that the presence of it among comrades in revolt is thought essential to success. But experience of the struggle leads to a despair of the powers of love, leaving naked hate as the driving force. A rebel of this type, if, like Marx, he invents a philosophy, invents one solely designed to demonstrate the ultimate victory of his party, not one concerned with values. His values remain primitive: the good is enough to eat, and the rest is talk. No hungry man is likely to think otherwise.

The aristocratic rebel, since he has enough to eat, must have other causes of discontent. I do not include among rebels the mere leaders of factions temporarily out of power; I include only men whose philosophy requires some greater change than their own personal success. It may be that love of power is the underground source of their discontent, but in their conscious thought there is criticism of the government of the world, which, when it goes deep enough, takes the form of Titanic cosmic self-assertion, or, in those who retain some superstition, of Satanism. Both are to be found in Byron. Both, largely through men whom he influenced, became common in large sections of society which could hardly be deemed aristocratic. The aristocratic philosophy of rebellion, growing, developing, and changing as it approached maturity, has inspired a long series of revolutionary movements, from the Carbonari after the fall of Napoleon to Hitler's coup in 1933; and at each stage it has inspired a corresponding manner of thought and feeling among intellectuals and artists.

It is obvious that an aristocrat does not become a rebel unless his temperament and circumstances are in some way peculiar. Byron's circumstances were very peculiar. His earliest recollections were of his parents' quarrels; his mother was a woman whom he feared for her cruelty and despised for her vulgarity; his nurse combined wickedness with the strictest Calvinist theology; his lameness filled him with shame, and prevented him from being one of the herd at school. At ten years old, after living in poverty, he suddenly found himself a Lord and the owner of Newstead. His great-uncle, the "wicked Lord," from whom he inherited, had killed a man in a duel thirty-three years ago, and been ostracized by his neighbors ever since. The Byrons had been a lawless family, and the Gordons, his mother's ancestors, even more so. After the squalor of a back street in Aberdeen, the boy naturally rejoiced in his title and his Abbey, and was willing to take on the character of his ancestors in gratitude for their lands. And if, in recent years, their bellicosity had led them into trouble, he learnt that in former centuries it had brought them renown.

As an undergraduate, when for the first time he had an income of his own, he wrote that he felt as independent as "a

Next Week

THE UNVANQUISHED
By WILLIAM FAULKNER
Reviewed by Bernard DeVoto

THE BIG FIRM
By AMABEL WILLIAMS-ELLIS
Reviewed by Jonathan Daniels

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German Prince who coins his own cash, or a Cherokee Chief who coins no cash at all, but enjoys what is more precious, Liberty. I speak in raptures of that Goddess because my amiable Mama was so despotic." He wrote, in later life, much noble verse in praise of freedom, but it must be understood that the freedom he praised was that of a German Prince or a Cherokee Chief, not the inferior sort that might conceivably be enjoyed by ordinary mortals.

In spite of his lineage and his title, his aristocratic relations fought shy of him, and he was made to feel himself socially not of their society. His mother was intensely disliked, and he was looked on with suspicion. He knew that she was vulgar, and darkly feared a similar defect in himself. Hence arose that peculiar blend of snobbery and rebellion that characterized him. If he could not be a gentleman in the modern style, he would be a bold Baron in the style of his crusading ancestors, or perhaps in the more ferocious but even more romantic style of the Ghibelline chiefs, cursed of God and man as they trampled their way to splendid downfall. Medieval romances and histories were his etiquette books. He sinned like the Hohenstaufen, and like the crusaders he died fighting the Moslem.

Calvinism, which he never shook off—to Shelley in 1816, he described himself as "methodist, Calvinist, Augustinian"—made him feel that his manner of life was wicked; but wickedness, he told himself, was a hereditary curse in his blood, an evil fate to which he was predestined by the Almighty. If that were indeed the case, since he *must* be remarkable, he would be remarkable as a sinner, and would dare transgressions beyond the courage of the fashionable libertines whom he wished to despise.

Byron, though he felt himself the equal of Satan, never quite ventured to put himself in the place of God. This next step in the growth of pride was taken by Nietzsche, who says: "If there were Gods, how could I endure it to be no God! *Therefore* there are no Gods." Observe the premise of this reasoning: "whatever humbles my pride is to be judged false." Nietzsche, like Byron, and even to a greater degree, had a pious upbringing, but having a better intellect, he found a better escape than Satanism.

The great man, to Nietzsche, is godlike; to Byron, usually, a Titan at war with himself. Sometimes, however, he portrays a sage not unlike Zarathustra:

> He who ascends to mountain tops, shall find
> The loftiest peaks most wrapped in cloud and snow;
> He who surpasses or subdues mankind,
> Must look down on the hate of those below.
> Though high *above* the sun of glory glow,

BYRON AT NINETEEN: *after the portrait by Sanders, from Peter Quennell's "Byron" (Viking Press).*

> And far *beneath* the earth and ocean spread,
> *Round* him are icy rocks, and loudly blow
> Contending tempests on his naked head,
> And thus reward the toils which to those summits led.

Byron was not obliged to confine himself to the Levant and the Middle Ages in his search for heroes, since it was not difficult to invest Napoleon with a romantic mantle. The influence of Napoleon on the imagination of nineteenth-century Europe was very profound; he inspired Clausewitz, Stendhal, Heine, the thought of Fichte, and the acts of Italian patriots. His ghost stalks through the age, the only force which is strong enough to stand up against industrialism and commerce, pouring scorn on pacifism and shopkeeping. Tolstoy's "War and Peace" is an attempt to exorcise the ghost, but a vain one, for the spectre has never been more powerful than at the present day. Just after Waterloo, Byron summed him up:

> Quiet to quick bosoms is a hell,
> And *there* had been thy bane; there is a fire
> And motion of the soul, which will not dwell
> In its own narrow being, but aspire
> Beyond the fitting medium of desire;
> And, but once kindled, quenchless evermore,
> Preys upon high adventure, nor can tire
> Of aught but rest; a fever at the core,
> Fatal to him who bears, to all who ever bore.

During the Hundred Days, he proclaimed his wish for Napoleon's victory, and when he heard of Waterloo he said "I'm damned sorry for it." Only once, for a moment, did he turn against his hero: in 1814, when (so he thought) suicide would have been more seemly than abdication. At this moment, he sought consolation in the virtue of Washington, but the return from Elbe made this effort no longer necessary. In France, when Byron died, "it was remarked in many newspapers that the two greatest men of the century, Napoleon and Byron, had disappeared almost at the same time." Carlyle, who, at the time, considered Byron "the noblest spirit in Europe," and felt as if he had "lost a brother," came afterwards to prefer Goethe, but still coupled Byron with Napoleon.

To Carlyle, Goethe and Byron were antitheses; to Alfred de Musset, they were accomplices in the wicked work of instilling the poison of melancholy into the cheerful Gallic soul. To Musset, it was only after Napoleon that Byron and Goethe were the greatest geniuses of the century. Born in 1810, Musset was one of the generation whom he describes as "conçus entre deux batailles" in a lyrical account of the glories and disasters of the Empire. In Germany, feeling about Napoleon was more divided. There were those who, like Heine, saw him as the mighty missionary of liberalism, the destroyer of serfdom, the enemy of legitimacy, the man who made hereditary princelings tremble; there were others who saw him as Antichrist, the would-be destroyer of the noble German nation, the immoralist who had proved once for all that Teutonic virtue can only be preserved by unquenchable hatred of France. Bismarck effected a synthesis: Napoleon remained Antichrist, but an Antichrist to be imitated, not merely to be abhorred. Nietzsche, who accepted the compromise, remarked with ghoulish joy that the classical age of war is coming, and that we owe this boon, not to the French Revolution, but to Napoleon. And in this way nationalism, Satanism, and hero-worship, the legacy of Byron, became part of the complex soul of Germany.

Mary Shelley's "Frankenstein," written under the inspiration of conversations with Byron in the romantic scenery of the Alps, contains what might almost be regarded as an allegorical prophetic history of the development of romanticism. Frankenstein's monster is not, as he has become in proverbial parlance, a mere monster: he is, at first, a gentle being, longing for human affection, but he is driven to hatred and violence by the horror which his ugliness inspires in those whose love he attempts to gain.

> My heart [he said of himself] was fashioned to be susceptible of love and sympathy; and, when wrenched by misery, and vice and hatred, it did not endure the violence of the change, without torture such as you cannot even imagine. . . . When I run over the frightful catalogue of my sins, I cannot believe that I am the same creature whose thoughts were once filled with sublime and transcendent visions of the beauty and the majesty of goodness. But it is even so; the fallen angel becomes a

(*Continued on page* 16)

THE SATURDAY REVIEW OF LITERATURE, published weekly by the Saturday Review Company, Inc., 25 West 45th Street, New York, N. Y. Noble A. Cathcart, President and Treasurer; Henry Seidel Canby, Vice-President and Chairman; Amy Loveman, Secretary. Subscription, $3.50 a year. Vol. XVII, No. 16, February 12, 1938. Entered as second-class matter at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under the Act of March 3, 1879.

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"Fiery Furnace"

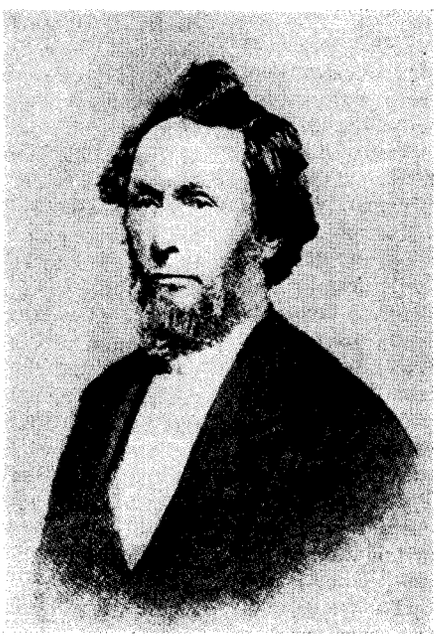
THE HIDDEN LINCOLN, From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon. Edited by Emanuel Hertz. New York: The Viking Press. 1938. $5.

Reviewed by PAUL H. BUCK

THERE are many reasons for recognizing this book as one of the most important volumes yet published on Abraham Lincoln. In the first place it makes available to the public the exceedingly valuable material collected by William H. Herndon, Lincoln's law partner from 1844 to 1865. Herndon began collecting almost immediately after Lincoln's assassination. He arranged and analyzed his own intimate knowledge of Lincoln. He traced back over Lincoln's life in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois until, as a result of personal interviews and extensive correspondence, his records grew into a body of material which has been and must always remain the foundation of every biography written about Lincoln. The importance of having this material published is obvious.

In the second place, the book does much to rehabilitate Herndon's reputation. Herndon worshipped Lincoln as an idol, describing him more than once as "the best man, the kindest, tenderest, noblest, loveliest since Christ." But he also recognized that the central truth in a proper delineation of Lincoln's character was the "fiery furnace" through which a crude and imperfect man was refined into greatness. Consequently he insisted upon revealing the whole truth about Lincoln, the vulgar and sordid as well as the pure and noble. No man ever devoted himself more honestly to the pursuit of truth. It led him into bitter controversy over ugly matters relating to the paternity of Lincoln's mother and of Lincoln himself, the issue of Lincoln's religion, the Ann Rutledge story, and the domestic hell that was Lincoln's homelife. The man who confessed a "sublime faith in the triumph and eternity of truth," and who was convinced that all that he knew about Lincoln "only exalts him, brightens and sublimes him, and will endlessly draw the sympathies of mankind to him," was pilloried and continuously maligned as Lincoln's chief traducer. No man ever fought a more desperate battle to have "truth" rather than "good taste" serve as the criterion of biography. "The great, keen, shrewd, boring, patient, philosophic, critical, and remorselessly searching world," he wrote, "will find out all things, and bring them to light, and the question is now: who shall do that—a man's friends or his enemies?" No one who reads these pages need ever more hesitate in his answer.

In the third place, the book is eloquent in explanation of why ninety-nine percent of the overwhelming mass of books, articles, poems, and fictionalized stories about Lincoln is trash. It bears crushing testimony against those who have tried to make Lincoln a sham. It does more in revealing why the greater Lincoln scholars failed to achieve a definitive biography. Mr. Hertz's introduction and Herndon's letters establish the fact that every biographer borrowed heavily from Herndon's materials. But all worked with reservations in their minds and simply appropriated those parts of Herndon's work which harmonized with their preconceptions. Even Beveridge's use of the material, as Mr. Hertz indicates, leaves something to be desired.



WILLIAM H. HERNDON IN 1860
Courtesy of the Henry E. Huntington Library, from "The Hidden Lincoln."

In the fourth place the book performs a service because it at last brings frankly into the open for proper analysis and appraisal the vulgar phases of Lincoln's background. So long as powerful influences operated to suppress these stories, rumors as to their existence circulated and tended to magnify them in importance. Once exposed to the light of day and correlated to Herndon's thesis that Lincoln's life was a purifying process, the stories seem relatively unimportant. Some are exposed as lies, others appear to rest upon inadequate evidence, and the residue does little more than depict the life of ordinary folk of the time and the place familiar to all realistic students of the frontier in Kentucky, Indiana, and Illinois.

In the fifth place the material in the book is inherently important. It demonstrates conclusively that Herndon contributed more than any other person to the factual knowledge of Lincoln's pre-presidential years. It also establishes what has not been so well understood and certainly not generally accepted: that his interpretation of this material is valid on many counts and cannot be disregarded. Mr. Hertz makes no effort to submit Herndon himself to criticism, but the job can now be carried on from where Paul Angle left it in the preface to his edition of the Herndon-Weik "Life of Lincoln." Herndon obviously had a personality of his own and that personality interposed a barrier between himself and a complete understanding of Lincoln. But Herndon wrote so candidly, completely, and even repetitiously that the reader has all the material necessary, to discover the errors in his reporting and speculation.

Mr. Hertz has modestly kept his own contribution in the background. One can only begin to suspect the amount of unselfish labor and expense required to bring this collection together. His reward will come in recognition of the fact that he like Herndon has served well the memory of Abraham Lincoln.

Paul H. Buck is the author of "The Road to Reunion."

Leap Minnows, Leap

BY JAMES STILL

THE minnows leap in drying pools.
In islands of water along the creekbed sands
They spring on drying tails, white bellies to the sun,
Gills spread, gills fevered and gasping.
The creek is sun and sand, and fish throats rasping.

One pool has a peck of minnows. One living pool
Is knuckle deep with dying, a shrinking yard
Of glittering bellies. A thousand eyes look, look.
A thousand gills strain, strain the water-air.
There is plenty of water above the dam, locked and deep,
Plenty, plenty and held. It is not here,
It is not where the minnows spring with lidless fear.
They die as men die. Leap minnows, leap.

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An Arctic Tragedy

HELL ON ICE: The Saga of the Jeannette. *By Commander Edward Ellsberg. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company.* 1938. $2.75.

Reviewed by FELIX RIESENBERG

AT LAST it seems that literature is turning toward a vast and almost forgotten region. Numbers of books on polar adventure have appeared in the past ten years; many of them are factual stories of recent discoveries, or accounts of the minor adventures of scientists; a few are brave gestures describing initial flights across the ice caps. Historical works, mere rehashes, have appeared in impressive bindings; they are books shot through with error which a public unfamiliar with the subject fails to perceive. However all of this has stimulated an interest in the frigid zones. Now Commander Ellsberg, favorably known to a large audience, presents his story of the *Jeannette* Expedition of 1879, thereby reviving an almost forgotten episode in the epic of the Arctic.

Briefly he reviews his own first interest in the struggle and death of De Long, commander of the expedition, and records how he set about gathering information, and how his enthusiasm was fired as the vast canvas of the struggle on the frozen Lena Delta unrolled. Great men and small men, victims and victors, move through the narrative of battle against the frozen ocean and in the hopeless fight during two long polar nights on a small ship that at last foundered under pressure of the ice floes.

The most interesting feature of Commander Ellsberg's narrative is the device he adopts to tell his story. Let me quote from the author's preface.

> It occurred to me that as I had once narrated in the first person in "On the Bottom" the battle of another group of sea men (of whom I was one) with the ocean for the sunken Submarine S-51, I might here best give this story life and reality by relating it in fictional form as the personal narrative of one of the members of the expedition.
>
> But who should that man be?

Of the surviving officers, Melville, chief engineer, Dannenhower, navigator, and Newcomb, naturalist, Commander Ellsberg chose the engineer.

> Melville patently was best. And aside from the fact that Melville was a leading light in the expedition and next to De Long himself the man who actually bore the brunt of Arctic fury, he was an engineer, and as I was also, I could most easily identify myself with him and his point of view.
>
> So here as it might have been told about thirty years ago by Admiral George Wallace Melville, retired Engineer-In-Chief of the Navy, blunt, loyal and lovable, a man whose versatility in four widely dissimilar fields of human endeavor gave him at his death in 1912 good claim to being considered one of America's geniuses, is the Saga of the *Jeannette*.

Now we are set for the outline of a great story. Fascinating chapters cover the selection of the *Jeannette*, a *New York Herald* enterprise, sponsored by the U. S. Navy, the ship having been purchased by James Gordon Bennett, and presented to the expedition. The plan was to enter the Arctic by Behring Sea, push into the ice and drift across the Pole, possibly steaming through lanes of open water which it was thought might have been the result of a branching north of the "black tide" of Japan, the Kuro-Si-Wo current, the "Gulf Stream" of the Pacific. Unfortunately this theory proved fallacious. Hard seas, terrific storms, beset the *Jeannette*. She was frozen in with the tragic results which Commander Ellsberg tells.

The high spot of the narrative comes at the climax of the struggle between the ocean ice and the ship. But let not this description, excellent as it may be, and worthy and exciting, be supposed as striking as that from the pen of Chief Engineer Melville. Two brief selections depicting the scene, one from Melville, and the other from "Hell on Ice" should be compared.

> "Turn out if you want to see the last of the *Jeannette*. [The officers and crew had abandoned ship and were camped on the nearby ice.] There she goes! There she goes!"

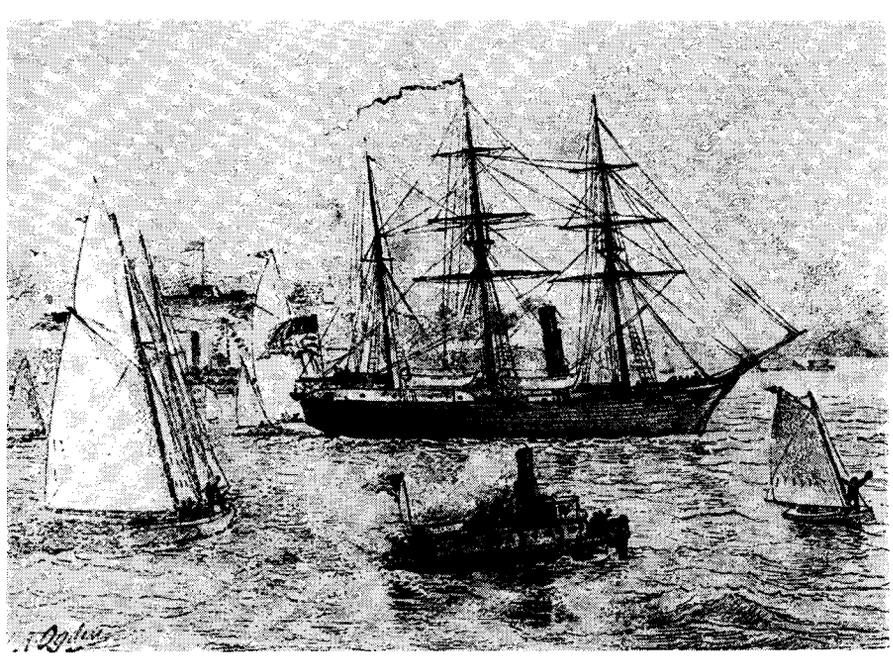
So far both fiction and fact read the same. Now, here is what Commander Ellsberg writes in his fiction:

> I leaped up and out of the tent. There was the listed *Jeannette* coming slowly upright over the pack, for all the world like a ghost rising from a snowy tomb. The floes holding the ship, as if satisfied at having fully crushed the life from her, were evidently backing away. She came erect, her spars rattling and creaking dismally as she rose, then the ice opening further, she started to sink with accelerating speed. Quickly the black hull disappeared, then her yards banged down on the ice, stripped from the masts, and in another instant, over the foretopmast, the last bit of her I ever saw, the dark waters closed and the sturdy *Jeannette* had sunk, gone to an ocean grave beneath the Arctic floes!

And, here is what G. W. Melville wrote, in his "In the Lena Delta:"

> [Having as above, heard the warning of the watch] most of us had barely time to arise and look out, when, amid the rattling and banging of her timbers and iron work, the ship righted and stood almost upright; the floes that had come in and crushed her slowly backed off, and as she sank with slightly accelerated velocity, the yard-arms were stripped and broken upward parallel to the masts; and so, like a great, gaunt skeleton clapping its hands above its head, she plunged out of sight.

I have always considered this description of a ship foundering in the ice as among the very few masterpieces of nautical description. Indeed, in my opinion, George W. Melville, penning what he had actually seen and felt, takes place close beside that other sailor-genius, Herman Melville. Commander Ellsberg needs one hundred and twenty-six words as against the eighty-nine used by G. W. Melville. But, then, as the Commander generously says, Chief Engineer Melville was somewhat of a genius. Commander Ellsberg, himself, has done a competent job of writing and his work may serve to direct a few among its thousands of readers to some of the original reports.



THE *JEANNETTE* LEAVING SAN FRANCISCO
From G. W. Melville's "In the Lena Delta" (1885).

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FROM THE JACKET OF
"A TIME TO LAUGH"

"Light Will Come"

A TIME TO LAUGH. By Rhys Davies. New York: Stackpole Sons. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by N. L. ROTHMAN

THERE is a time to weep and a time to laugh, says the preacher in Ecclesiastes, a time to love and a time to hate. And here we have this robust novel by Rhys Davies, which urges with all the eloquence at its writer's command that no time must or can swallow us up, that in the blackest time of tears and hate we can find heart to love, reason to laugh, and be whole. If most labor novels today are written in the spirit of that preacher, then especially welcome is Mr. Davies's stubborn voice of fortitude. It is not a bland optimism he offers, for his story of the Welsh collieries is one of undeviating and violent disorder and defeat. It opens with a strike riot and practically closes with another; all the way through it is the bitter war of miner against owner, organizing, striking, starving, fighting, a tale that seems familiar enough to us today although it is placed in Wales at the close of the last century. But all of this is only half of Mr. Davies's story. The other half is the richer one, the salt and the savor of Welsh life.

He is primarily a novelist who would rather write about people than about social forces, and who, if he decides he must do both, feels that the people make the forces rather than the other way about. The difference is considerable. It shifts the focus from labor history to personal history. It fills in a multitude of characterizations, moods, motives, emotions, that the basic ideologic drama can, and does, dispense with. It permits the gaze to turn from the mines towards a powerful, electric revival meeting in the hills—the same miners, these, but living high now, in another way—or towards a personal struggle irrelevant to the strike but entangled with it in time and space. The characters are realer than their circumstances and they know it, enough to exclaim, as one of them does in defeat: "Light will come! Murky and spluttering at first, then a sun, a sun!" That makes heartening reading, these days.

Plum Pudding

HARVEST COMEDY. By Frank Swinnerton. New York: Doubleday, Doran & Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by THEODORE PURDY, JR.

TWENTY-FIVE titles are credited to Mr. Swinnerton on the list given in the front of his new novel. Even with the darkly distinguished name of his best book excluded, the showing would still be a respectable one, and few will deny that he has long been a proficient craftsman and a steady producer. Mr. Swinnerton is in his prime, and by all the laws of logic and practice this twenty-sixth literary child of his should be thoroughly representative of his qualities.

"Harvest Comedy" is a rich, lengthy, well-contrived story—perhaps a bit too well-contrived, in fact. The lives of three men are outlined in it from boyhood rivalries at school to more mature struggles for money, fame, and love, in the course of which two of them are ruined, and all three become bitter enemies. An interlocking chain of women binds them and the whole complicated plot together. There are few golden sheaves in this harvest and little comedy, but at least the hero does in the end reap the fruits of many patient years, finding the right link in the chain after several futile attempts.

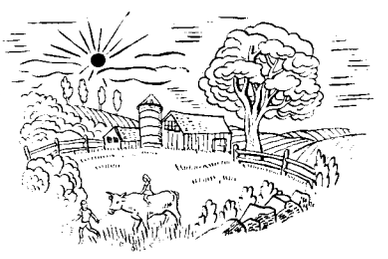
And what of the treatment? Like Walpole and some other British practitioners of his generation, Mr. Swinnerton is apt nowadays to liven his rather conventional backgrounds and characters with a touch of melodrama. In this case the trick produces little effect. Though there are two murders and several scenes of violence in "Harvest Comedy," they cannot be said to add much to the book's attractions, and the total impression is one of unexciting competence. The best scenes are those laid in Fleet Street and the London journalistic world, of which Mr. Swinnerton writes with something of his old verve. On the whole, though, this is an earthbound book, readable but earthbound. A note on the jacket compares the story to a good plum pudding. There is something in the idea: it contains many tried ingredients, certainly, and is not without flavor. Equally, its specific density is remarkably high, and it will not be to everyone's taste.

Through a Boy's Eyes

BROOKS TOO BROAD FOR LEAPING. By Flannery Lewis. New York: The Macmillan Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by JAMES D. HART

FLANNERY LEWIS'S first novel and second book is a chronicle of childhood whose very subject matter would seem to make it a direct antithesis to the narrative of an old woman's recollections with which he began his literary career. There is, nevertheless, a fundamental and revealing similarity. In his first book, "Suns Go Down," he brought to life the character of a wise, salty old lady, and left the surrounding figures vague by comparison; in "Brooks Too Broad For Leaping" he gives an understanding interpretation of his seven-year-old hero, Mark, but fails to evoke a complete belief in the actuality of the other characters. Both books are escapes to a past which seems half real, half legendary.



From the jacket of "Brooks too Broad for Leaping."

In this novel the universe of grown people is observed through the eyes of the youngster who sees his own world clearly but is as puzzled in understanding that in which his elders move as they are in trying to share his. The abstractions with which older people are concerned—a war to make the world safe for democracy, an epidemic of influenza, and a union of laboring men—these come to him darkly through the concrete manifestations of flags and bands, gauze bandage strips to be worn across the mouth, and large placards lettered I. W. W.

Older people themselves are either shadowy or unfathomable to Mark. What really concerns him are the human relationships with children his own age. His problems are to deal with the pale, golden-haired little Judith, who is indecently demonstrative in her desire to walk to school with him; to discover the solution for his fear and distrust of the tough boy Peg; or to understand why he inevitably comes to quarrel with his best friend. In dealing with these matters Mr. Lewis has chosen to ally himself so far as possible with the child's own world and limited horizon. By this procedure he gives the reader the feeling one might receive upon looking over an old photo album whose snaps of children's faces remind one of youthful companions without giving an insight into their reasoning and ways of life. Mark's reactions are true, but the reasons for these reactions are less clear because we cannot see them through Mark's eyes.

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The Saturday Review
of Literature

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THE SATURDAY REVIEW is indexed in the "Readers' Guide to Periodical Literature."

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Romans à Clef (1)

WITH a sure sense of relative values, Mr. Stuart Chase refused to extend his recent treatise on semantics to literary criticism. A later edition enlarged to about twice the present length, however, ought to have room for a few footnotes on the richest forcing-bed for words, the activity where the bigger word is always the better one and the two-dollar word, what Mark Twain called the alphabetical procession, invariably carries conviction with it. We intend to work in pure criticism for a while and we want to be taken with complete seriousness. So please understand that the subtitle of these remarks is: Prolegomenon to a Study of Pseudoblepsis as a Predisposing Condition to Literary Criticism, Together with Some Propositions in Epistemology.

For over twenty years now we have attentively studied the two camps, the scholarly and the metaphysical, that divide criticism between them. Neither theory nor practice establishes a definite frontier between the two; both schools cover much the same ground, use much the same methods, and come out with much the same results. Nevertheless there is a difference between them. The bystander finds it insufficient to justify the suspicion and even contempt with which each customarily regards the other, but it exists and it is fairly fundamental. It is this: in general, the scholars are primarily interested in origins and the nonacademic are primarily interested in stupendous ideas. The ground common to both is an area within which, when looking at Dick Roe's novel or sonnet, they exclaim How beautiful! The area is not large, however, and they soon forsake it and get down to the more important business of exclaiming, respectively, How borrowed! and How profound!

Veiled with whatever rationalizations, modernized with whatever Schiaparelli frock, a scholarly study of literature usually proves to be an exploration of sources, influences, and parallels. Before he fixes poor Dick Roe on a glass slide and shoves him under the 1000-x objective, the scholar has usually adopted, explicitly or unconsciously, the hypothesis that Dick has no experience or ideas of his own and lacks the ability to observe or invent any. He is practically certain therefore that, looking into his microscope (which is always monocular), he will find that such ideas and experiences as appear in Dick's books originated somewhere else —and it practically always turns out that he was right. Usually they came from other books and pretty abstruse ones at that, back in the least visited stacks of the library, toward the Sanscrit section. Linkages extend from them to Chaucer, to Pliny, to Plato, and to the predecessors of Plato. Scholarship posits, somewhere offstage, back before the Greeks, before the Egyptians, before the Minoans, a common pool of ideas and experience from which all literature has flowed uninterruptedly albeit deviously and deceptively. Because the truth is terrible and sacred, scholarship never tries to get all the way back to that great well. But it moves toward it and presently—because after separating all the sources Dick employed and all the influences that beat upon him, it mixes them together again —it finds it has a Zeitgeist by the tail. And at that exact point, running round the equator to the west, it collides with metaphysical criticism, which has been running hellbent round the same great circle to the east.

For meanwhile the nonacademic critic has been looking at Dick's books and has found amazement. They show the rise of finance capitalism or the disintegration of the bourgeoisie. They repudiate the Christian ethos on behalf of a dawning collectivism or they go beyond tragedy to reconcile the cycads and *Pteraspis* with the mind of modern man. They embody civilization pivoting on its axis and splitting along its inherent cleavage lines, for a regrouping of men's hopes toward the next great unity in the Western world. Out of all the past have they come to be, and quickening in their womb is, say about page 230, tomorrow. And here the metaphysical critic makes a high hitch to the Zeitgeist and, as he turns page 231, meets the professor rounding the turn.

All this time both of them have been scrutinizing Dick Roe's novel. The sources are surprising and the meaning is very deep, but something is wrong with somebody's eyes. Optics, one realizes suddenly, is not ophthalmology.

It is true that when you were a Christian slave in Babylon we were Max Lerner and so contrived to get tanned in large ideas, but climbing the Wheel toward ultimate extinction in Brahma, we have had to live many lifetimes among literary persons and the tanning has worn out. We are not comfortable when mingling with either school. We cannot believe that Dick read all the books which the scholar says influenced his stuff. We know that Dick keeps fully up to date with his James Thurber and has read part of "Men of Good Will," but it is not true that he got that bitter scene of parting lovers from Hermes Trismegistus and that image of the fluidity of time from Matthew Paris's "Historia Minor." The Professor has read the Hermetic writings but, we promise you, Dick has not. He finds it hard to concentrate on any reading that isn't mostly dialogue, took a B.S. instead of a B.A. because the third conjugation threw him, and can make nothing whatever of books old enough to have the *s*'s look like *f*'s. Besides, he is too indolent to go looking for his stuff and too sensible to borrow it when he can sit still and make it up. That scene of parting is just what Rose said to him back in his home town, touched up enough to deprive Rose of the honors. That image of time's illusion came to him when he missed an appointment by two hours because daylight saving had ended the day before and he had turned his watch the wrong way.

Having lived with Dick half-way up the Wheel, we know he is no research scholar—and no great thinker. We can't find the disintegration of the bourgeoisie or the realignment of the Western world in his books because we can't find them in his mind, and we have to judge the ideas in his books by his own ideas. Once, while we still pursued great conceptions, we so admired a sociologist who has since become a Sacred Legend that we packed off and apprenticed ourself to him for a summer. He spent that summer roaming the woods in a G-string and shooting at dicky-birds with a home-made bow because he thought that imitating the Indians would restore his youth, and lying three hours a day in thick mud with a north-south meridian running through his spine, because he thought that polarizing the magnetic currents of our Great Mother would cure his diabetes. Thereafter we couldn't help judging the ideas in his books by those ideas and we can't help judging the ideas in Dick Roe's books by the ideas we know Dick holds. We find his ideas about the probable winner of the world series and the cure of the common cold highly unreliable. He bases them on conversation and pure hunch, both wrong. That would be the basis of his ideas about the unity of tomorrow's world, if he had any. Usually he hasn't. Dick is a nice guy but he hasn't got enough cc. to hold Western man.

So what? Well, we have a great respect for Dick's ability to report on how his friends behave and how he feels about things. We trust him there—if not up to the hilt, then up to the limit of his honesty. He has a gift for making his psyche comfortable in the hostile world that is frequently inspired and amounts sometimes to genius. But that is persona, not Zeitgeist, and anybody who confuses them makes a bad mistake. Dick can write a very spirited and satisfying *roman à clef*, and criticism is very useful when it decides whether the key works at first, second, or third hand. But it is the key to Dick's phantasies and desire, not to the authorship of Shakespeare's plays or the structure of society.

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Letters to the Editor: *Propaganda in Civil War Fiction*

Unreconstructed Yankee

SIR:—Your appraisal of "Bugles Blow No More" was so sensible and adequate that I am forced to agree with you, even though it hurts. But the very merits of the novel, which you have now brought me to appreciate, make all the more deplorable the author's debasement of his work into a propaganda novel.

And when I say "propaganda" I mean just that. You are no doubt aware of the strong movement among certain types of Southerners to rewrite the history of the Civil War, and to make that revision acceptable to *all* Americans. It is a revision that would defend secession and condemn the Union, a revision that would canonize the Confederate and defame Grant, Lincoln, Sherman, and all those who wore the Army Blue. They would delete from the school rooms anything which does not glorify the Confederacy, even such remotely and unobtrusively anti-secession works as "The Man without a Country" or "The Battle Hymn of the Republic."

It is my belief that when Mr. Dowdey wrote "Bugles Blow No More" he wrote it primarily with the intention of furthering this Confederate revision of history. The chapter headings alone, which are supposedly typical quotations from the leading men of the time, lift the book from the ranks of pure historical fiction. The incidents and conversations which the author uses to demonstrate Northern depravity and Southern chivalry are too carefully chosen and too shrewdly handled to have been included for their mere dramatic value. The hatred of the United States, which is the driving motive of the book, is, in my opinion, presented in such a way that the author seems to be expressing not so much the sentiments of the Confederacy as his own beliefs and convictions. A novelist has a right to his own beliefs but he has no right to falsify or suppress history, or to sacrifice the artistic value and integrity of his book to impress these beliefs on the reader.

Remember that a man may be Union in sentiment and still be anti-Northern. That is, he may believe that economically and politically the Union was justified, but that morally Secession was justified. Most of those who support the Union in retrospect, today, regard it only as a necessary combination of finance, industry, and sociology, but of the Union the North fought for they know little and care less. *That* Union had nothing to do with capitalism or centralized government; it was little more than a tradition, an emblem, a battle cry, a song. Actually, the cause for which the Federal soldier fought was as emotional as that for which the Southerner fought, and far more indefinable. But however little he understood in it, and however justified it may have been, or however inevitable, the Union soldier believed in his cause as sincerely as the Confederate did in his; he fought for it as bravely, and died for it as futilely. And as long as we deny that—as long as we sanctify only one cause, and vilify the other—so long do we sacrifice one of the finest heritages our ancestors bequeathed to us. And as long as we teach our children to hate the Yankees instead of the war, so long do we neglect one of the most bitter lessons our past has taught us.

ELOISE R. LEHNERT.

New York City.

"THEY'VE BROUGHT OUT VOL. II FIRST. IF IT GOES, THEY'LL PUBLISH VOLS. I AND III."

England and the League

SIR:—In her review of Martelli's "Italy Against the World" (*S.R.L.*, Jan 29th), Vera Micheles Dean indorses the opinion of the author, that for electioneering purposes Mr. Baldwin and Sir Samuel Hoare unfairly created the impression that the British Government was ready to fight for collective security to the last ditch, but that on the contrary its record proves that its leaders had never intended to do so. Then she goes on to say: "In other words, while paying lip service to collective security, they had from the start excluded the possibility of really effective sanctions."

Now the facts are that short of war itself the British Government went further in its support of sanctions, the League of Nations, and collective action, than any other major nation in the world and by so doing incurred the most intense hostility of the Italian people. Your reviewer appears to hold the view that either because of self-interest or for the sake of the League of Nations, or both, Britain alone of all nations should have "unleashed the dogs of war" in an attempt to save Ethiopia from Italy.

Is this a reasonable view to take? Britain is but one member of the many nations which make up the League, and in the controversy with Italy, she got little or no support from any strong nation in her sincere efforts to make *collective* action effective, and, as a result, Ethiopia was left to its fate.

It is the fashion now to speak with derision of the League of Nations, but this surely is undeserved. Notwithstanding many failures, its steady purpose is still to make righteousness and justice prevail. But with five of the most powerful nations outside the League and some of them bitterly opposed to it, progress must be disappointingly slow, coercion of any kind being impossible until the League of Nations has more support from the major powers.

WM. TYRRELL,
Member of the League of Nations Society in Canada.

Toronto, Canada.

Work Fast and Like It

SIR:—Isn't it time for an apologia from Double-Crostics solvers who work fast and like it? The letters from those who take from four to fourteen hours sound very like rationalizing. "It is more fun to work slowly." How do you know? Did you ever solve one in fifteen minutes flat? Do it once and you will begin to identify that extra pleasure-giving factor that consists in successfully taking a dare.

Why the assumed contradiction, anyhow, between "a contest" and "a pleasure"? Those of us who solve fast would be bored to death dragging out the job.

ELIZABETH C. MOORE.

New York City.

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Irish Edwardians

THE RISING TIDE. By M. J. Farrell. New York: The Macmillan Co. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by CHARLOTTE MOODY

THIS is an extremely interesting and absorbing novel by the author of "Full House" and "Conversation Piece," books which attracted some attention in recent seasons. It is as much a story of a place and a period as of people; the place is Garonlea, an Irish estate, the period 1900 to the first years after the war, the people are the family of French-McGrath. Despite its setting and period, the war and the Irish Troubles are not important to the story, which concerns itself entirely with personality and environment.

Garonlea was Gothic, beautiful and melancholy, with a vague atmosphere of stuffiness and unhappiness. It was a perfect background for Lady Charlotte French-McGrath, an admirable setting in which to bully her docile daughters. But this is not the conventional picture of an Edwardian household. Lady Charlotte never met her match until she acquired her daughter-in-law Cynthia. Cynthia is the most important character in the book, with her unrealized cruelty to her own children, her hunting, her beauty and popularity, her drinking which she mostly fooled people into thinking was moderate, her decorous love affairs, her selfishness and efficiency. Cynthia, in time, altered Garonlea, making it comfortable and easy, throwing out the occasional tables, the tassels, the Dresden china black boys (life size), providing plenty of hot water, plenty to drink, and excellent food. But "in all these locked, out-of-the-way places—bedrooms still waiting their sack and purification, cupboards where old hoards of rubbish had not yet been dealt with mercilessly, trunks of photographs fading in their expensive silver frames, corners of the shrubberies and old airless parts of woods—the spirit and power of Garonlea still lived with a tenfold strength." It is impossible to say, until the last page, whether it is Lady Charlotte, now long dead, or Cynthia who wins in the end; or whether it is Garonlea which has vanquished them both.

It is difficult to give an accurate idea of this book without falling into phrases about Periods of Transition and the Spirit of the Times, which would be unfair, because the book is too human for that, some of its scenes too indelible. It is written with considerable beauty and sensitivity. If it has a flaw it is that feminine one of over-sensitivity, a too-great absorption in flower forms, a too-frequent use of the word "sleek." But a too-precise delicacy does not seem to matter here, where there are humor, perception, detachment, and penetration in a novel which is true of its period.

FROM THE JACKET OF "THIS PROUD HEART"

Woman's Woman

THIS PROUD HEART. By Pearl S. Buck. New York: Reynal & Hitchcock. (A John Day Book.) 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by FRANCES WOODWARD

PEARL BUCK likes women, and she writes very well indeed. So women like Pearl Buck's books. To say that a novel is for women readers is to imply that it is not of much account. Why, I'm sure I don't know. If a woman doesn't like a book about tall ships, fine bluff men, and the folkways of the male native guides in the upper Andes, she is practically forced to apologize publicly or play she has conjunctivitis until it recedes from the best seller list. But if a man doesn't like a book about a woman's life he can smile indulgently while the little woman wastes her time on it.

"This Proud Heart" is not cosmic. It is a good story, well put together and fast moving. The heroine is a sculptress, and to be perfectly frank I thought her a tiresome woman. Pearl Buck, I am sure, didn't think so when she contrived her. Remember, Mrs. Buck likes splendid women. This is her first attempt to do a novel with American characters. O-lan was the fine woman of China victimized by the Oriental attitude toward women. Susan Gaylord, fine to the cracking point of credulity, is the fantasy life of every woman in this too-enfranchised country.

Susan is physically and morally stronger, more sensitive, more talented, than any of her family, than any of her community, than either of her husbands, than either of her children. Her enormous capability, whether with pies or with heroic statues cut directly in the marble, alienates her from other women. But she is not embittered by it. She knows that loneliness is the price of creative genius. (She also, I suspect, comforts herself from time to time by thinking they are just jealous.) Susan has no sense of humor. Neither has Pearl Buck. This is perhaps the reason why though Mrs. Buck does, and should, command a large feminine reading public she will never entrench herself in the permanent affections of the really literate women for whom she writes as that manhater, "Elizabeth," has done.

But Pearl Buck creates good characters. She does know what things twist a woman's heart through sleepless nights. She is far too skillful and sophisticated to mistake bathos for sentiment. Many of the minor people in "This Proud Heart" seemed to me more living than Susan Gaylord. She struck me as continually, annoyingly out-size, clear-eyed, and pure in soul. But maybe, like the women she grew up with, I was just jealous. Anyhow, it's a far better than average story. And if men can spend happy evenings in the secret bitter knowledge that were it not for the dreary fact that biology trapped them young into matrimony they could be Moby Dick the Great White Whale, cannot their wives, in the other chair at the other side of the fireplace, be allowed the conviction that except for the identical accident they would be Susan Gaylord, America's greatest woman sculptress, self-taught at that?

A Civil War Journal

'WARE SHERMAN. By Joseph Le Conte. Berkeley: University of California Press. 1937. $1.50.

Reviewed by STEPHEN VINCENT BENÉT

THIS journal, kept by Joseph Le Conte in the last days of the Confederacy, has, nevertheless, a curiously contemporary flavor about it. For Le Conte was neither soldier nor politician, but a scientist. The beginning of the Civil War found him quietly teaching chemistry and geology in South Carolina College at Columbia, S. C. The end of the war was to find him scrambling through woods and swamps and the backwash of Sherman's invasion, first of all to get his sister and daughter safely away from the former's plantation near Savannah, and second to save his own household treasures when Columbia was taken.

The Journal itself, written down on scraps of paper at the time, and later revised, is vivid, unpretentious, and thoroughly good-tempered. Le Conte took trains that were shelled and other trains that got nowhere—he hid in the swamps from the Yankees, with a copy of a novel by G. P. R. James. "In the story of this novel I was soon so deeply absorbed that I forgot entirely the presence of the Yankees. The popping of their guns, unless they came very near, did not in the least disturb me." It is all like that—unforced, genuine, and the work of a civilized man. When he got to his sister's plantation, he found things better than he had expected. The Yankees had been rude and noisy, but nothing more; after one burlesque false start, he finally managed to get his relatives away. He was not so lucky, trying to get his household goods and papers

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away from Columbia. The wagons were found and burned—the goods burned or stolen. He himself had to hide in the woods for days. Finally, however, he got back home. Columbia had been burned, but his house was still standing, his family unharmed.

As I say, the book is thoroughly good-tempered. But its picture of the confusion and improvisations of a collapsing civilization is none the less sharp. Though Le Conte was somewhat luckier, in one respect, than a Le Conte might be today. His house in Columbia was in the hospital district and was neither bombarded nor burned. And, later on, he was to round out a distinguished career at the University of California. But he had meant to work in the South—the War and Reconstruction stopped that.

The book contains an introductory reminiscence by Caroline Le Conte, a portrait of Le Conte himself, and a number of sketches from the original Journal.

Fuehrer's Dilemma

THE HOUSE THAT HITLER BUILT. By Stephen H. Roberts. New York: Harper & Bros. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by JAMES FREDERICK GREEN

IN lieu of the proverbial visitor from Mars, what more detached observer of the Nazi dictatorship could be desired than a scholar from Australia? Dr. Roberts, professor of modern history at Sydney University, has compressed the results of a long European sojourn into a remarkably objective book. Broad in approach and moderate in tone, "The House that Hitler Built" is a complete and trustworthy account of contemporary Germany. While the democratic and individualist predilections of its author are obvious, they rarely impair his capacity for accurate reporting and balanced judgment.

In outlining the origin and development of Hitlerism, Dr. Roberts adds little to the studies of Schuman, Hoover, Gunther, and others, but he denies the frequent allegations that Hitler is merely the puppet of industrialists and munitions makers. Providing amusing glimpses into the ever-multiplying bureaucracy, he skillfully analyzes the conflicts of personality and policy within the Nazi party, and favors Heinrich Himmler as the probable successor to Hitler. In the asset column of the German ledger, this Australian visitor places first the revival of national self-respect and courage. The Nazi regime is almost universally popular, he believes, despite a declining standard of living and the opposition of church leaders. While condemning the intellectual degradation of the younger generation, Professor Roberts praises the physical training and social service provided by the youth organizations.

The economic balance sheet is of course less satisfactory. Dr. Roberts is convinced that the attempts at autarchy, however ingeniously undertaken, will eventually prove disastrous, and that "this fight for *Ersatz* goods is bound to fail." While admiring the dexterous "financial jugglery" of Dr. Schacht, whom he describes as "the most distinct personality" among German leaders, the author is pessimistic over the outcome. He regards the agricultural policies of Hitler as totally unsuccessful, in respect of both self-sufficiency and reform of Junkerism.

With regard to the cultural and racial aspects of Hitlerism, Dr. Roberts becomes almost completely antagonistic. Perhaps the most tragic effect of National Socialism upon the individual is the destruction of ability and desire to criticize.

Anticipating the current struggle between army and party leaders, Dr. Roberts predicts and favors the ultimate supremacy of the military group, which would provide the patriotism and strength needed by Germany without "the erratic uncertainty of the present regime." This observer corroborates the opinion of many others that an understanding or even alliance between Germany and the Soviet Union is not impossible, and that Hitler has not discarded his earlier ambition for a rapprochement with Britain. He presents an effective case for return of German colonies, and quickly disposes of British and Dominion objections. The tragedy within Hitler's new house, however, lies in "his basic dilemma. If he persists in the policies he has enunciated, he plunges Europe into war; if he abandons them, he can no longer maintain his position within Germany."

James F. Green is on the staff of the Foreign Policy Association.

Animal Sanctuaries

WARDENS OF THE WILD. By T. C. Bridges. New York: Dodd, Mead & Company. 1938. $2.50.

Reviewed by DONALD CULROSS PEATTIE

THE tide has turned, in the last forty years, and the biological history of the world is entering a new chapter. For the human animal has begun to adopt towards the other animals an attitude scarcely dreamed of before the opening of the present century. Formerly a king might set aside a sanctuary for animals—that is to say a sanctuary which it was reserved unto himself and his favorites to violate. Today the English-speaking countries of the world (and just a few others) have come to recognize that animals other than "pretty" animals are, in their own way, beautiful. That an extinct animal is irreplaceable. That the time to save a species is before it becomes rare. And that, economically useful or not, pestiferous or not, beautiful or not, all animals have their place in the structure of the biota. So that you cannot withdraw one brick without toppling the structure.

Mr. Bridges writes of the sanctuaries set aside in Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and the United States. And he writes with a fluent ease and enthusiasm that make one long to rush to a ticket office and take passage for far lands. Or even visit the North American parks! In reading a foreigner's description of the American parks one comprehends what an impression their scenery makes. We have nothing, however, to compare with the big game of Krueger Park in the Low Veldt, where it is necessary to post signs warning the tourists not to get out of their cars when lions, crocodiles, elephants, and cobras are

KOALA. *From "Wardens of the Wild."*

seen. Still, to the foreign visitor our bison, grizzlies, big-horns, and gila monsters are in their way astounding.

There is a splendid chapter on the Carl Akeley sanctuary for the persecuted gorillas of the Belgian Congo. This is the only extended account of animal protection in a country not under Anglo-Saxon government. Actually, the Dutch government also undertakes to protect its colonial wild-life; and it would be surprising if the French and Russians, in their great empires, were blind to the economic importance of maintaining wilderness areas.

The koala bear was brought close to extinction by the trade in its fur. Mr. Bridges in his narrative points the sound moral that laws to protect the koala bear (no bear, really, but a marsupial) were not enough. It had to become unprofitable to market the pelts before the wanton destruction was halted. Education in the primary schools rounded off the victory. And that is the second excellent moral of this excellent book.

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Louisa in the Laboratory

LOUISA MAY ALCOTT. By Katharine Anthony. New York: Alfred A. Knopf. 1938. $3.

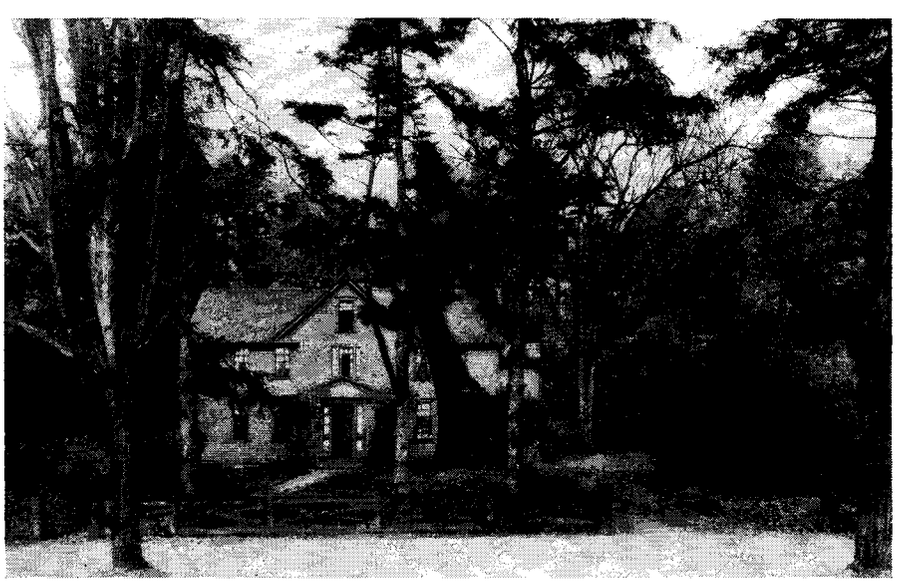
Reviewed by HENRY SEIDEL CANBY

MISS ANTHONY says that she determined to write a life of Louisa Alcott for adults, and in this she has succeeded. The strange, wild girl, sacrificing her own independence for a family usually in difficulties and often in disaster, is depicted in this book as a victim of neuroses, sometimes of her own making, a psychic and physical invalid for part of her life, a writer who understood little men and women far better than her adult self. The strange later life of America's best loved author, when she ran from doctor to doctor and retreat to retreat, becomes far more intelligible after Miss Anthony has linked her aberrations to the shock of her Civil War hospital experience, when as a young girl sheltered from crude reality, she was rushed without transition into an agony of tortured male bodies and the gross frankness of war.

But Miss Anthony's method, here so successful, makes this biography on the whole entirely unsatisfactory. Some one else will have to do another Life for adults, not neglecting Miss Anthony's work, but correcting and completing it. This biographer is determined to have out once and for all the ugly or pathetic complexes of Louisa's mind, and in so doing she has operated like a too eager surgeon who destroys the tissues he works upon. For Miss Anthony, the Transcendentalists among whom Louisa spent her childhood—her father Bronson, Emerson, Thoreau, and the rest—are queer, strained people, each with his own neurosis. She misses utterly the intellectual and spiritual excitement of Concord in those days, and the almost rapturous rediscovery of the personality as the center of existence. Hence her account of Louisa's formative years is unconvincing and flat. And though she gives her books a praise long denied them by literary pundits, she misses entirely the secret of their success. Less concern with complexes, and more attention to the new attitude toward the worth and charm and validity of the child's personality which Bronson Alcott taught in his books and practised in his school, would have resulted in a very different account of the influence of Transcendentalism upon Louisa. For she plucked from that mystical enthusiasm one of its most vital ideas, and in retelling her own youth for a world of readers, made children's personalities as interesting to those readers as their souls had been to her much scoffed-at father.

Even more serious than Miss Anthony's failure to interpret Louisa's early environment, is her determination to apply her theory of psychic wounds regardless of the facts.

I pass over minor errors as of little importance, but one instance is a perfect example of the traps that wait for all psychiatric biographers more interested in psychiatry than in what happened. Louisa's first novel was called "Moods": Miss Anthony, relying upon her statement that it was "founded upon fact, and the characters drawn from life" finds in this story of a young girl who falls in love with her husband's friend, a replica of the situation at the experimental community of Fruitlands where, so she implies, Mrs. Alcott fell in love with Alcott's friend, the Englishman Charles Lane. Louisa, a little girl at the time, saw this triangle in the making and breaking,



ORCHARD HOUSE: *Courtesy of the Louisa M. Alcott Association.*

Little, Brown & Co.
LOUISA MAY ALCOTT *(about 1852).*

and the psychic wound became articulate in "Moods." A good theory to explain the first and later work of a spinster.

Unfortunately the facts are different. It was asserted by a contemporary that the hero of "Moods" was Thoreau. A careful reading makes this at least probable. Adam Warwick is an independent wanderer, loving the woods, a man who speaks brusque truth without regard to feelings. "Adam . . . clings to principles; persons are but animated facts or ideas. . . . He obeys the law of his nature as steadily as sun or sea." He is rich because "he makes his wants so few." It would be hard to get a better description of Thoreau as Louisa must have seen and heard him talk again and again at her father's house. It is Thoreau as Alcott knew him; and the voyage on the river where the heroine fell in love may well be a reminiscence of the Thoreau brothers, who, both in love with the same girl, spent the famous "Week on the Concord and Merrimack Rivers."

Furthermore, no character in this book bears the slightest resemblance to the Alcotts or to Lane. And finally, if Miss Anthony had consulted Professor Shepard's definitive "Pedlar's Progress" published last spring, she would have learned on what seems to be sufficient evidence, that Lane, far from being a seducer of women, was engaged in a bitter struggle with Mrs. Alcott over Bronson, whom he was persuading to give up a family life which, according to his stern principles, was the last obstacle to the perfecting of the human community.

But it is not necessary to show what Louisa did have in mind for "Moods" in order to show the excessive danger of erecting a psychological theory upon a situation which could not have wounded her since it never existed. There has been too much of this sort of thing in recent biography. It has got to stop, or we shall have the invaluable means of analysis which the new psychology offers to biographers, entirely discredited.

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The Bowling Green by Christopher Morley

A Casual Anthology

Saint Helena: May 1820

"THERE is a wind that blows when heroes die,
Storms shake the world and headlong comets fall;
And afterward there is no sound at all
Save the dull weeping of the widowed sky.
So was it once when Caesar came to lie
On his last pallet by the Roman wall;
So may it be again when voices call
In the forked lightning, where the tempests cry.

Hark how the long waves, booming in from sea,
Break on this cursèd crumb of earth and stone
How the tall clouds their black battalions form!
There is meaning in this mimicry
Deeper than we have pondered, Montholon. . . .
I think by morning we shall have a storm."

VINCENT STARRETT.

The Federal art projects have proven conclusively that there exists in the United States the potentialities for a great and flourishing culture, which will, if properly developed, make our country a greater Nation, and render upon our people as a whole the occasion to exercise with democratic equity their cultural aspirations.

—A Bill to provide for a permanent Bureau of Fine Arts; introduced in the U. S. Senate by Mr. Pepper, Jan. 21, 1938

[*One of our own cultural aspirations is to see plural nouns mated with plural verbs.*—Editor.]

Samuel Johnson, first president of Columbia University. Autograph letter to his son, 1756. "I have admitted 9 Freshmen and believe we will get one more."

—Catalogue of the American Autograph Shop, Merion Station, Pa.

It is sometimes hard to decide from the Reviews who are the best and most significant writers of the moment. . . . [*speaking of the pessimistic novelists of the past 15 years*] Some of them have that knowledge of what to leave out which is half the literary game, that *savoir taire* which is half of *savoir faire*. . . . Miss Willa Cather has been of our day, and did not let life fool her; her books contain enough adulteries to keep them sweet; but the struggle avails somewhat, and at the end at least good has existed.

—Address by Professor J. S. P. Tatlock at Rockford College commencement, 1935.

The Number 365. The number of days in a year presents rather peculiar arithmetical properties. It is equal to the sums of three consecutive squares beginning with 10, that is

$$365 = 10^2 + 11^2 + 12^2$$

It is also equal to the sum of the squares 13 and 14

$$365 = 13^2 + 14^2$$

—*Scripta Mathematica*, January 1938 (a quarterly published by Yeshiva College, New York City)

FRASER, A. C. Selections from Berkeley. Oxford 1879. Used by Barrie as a student at Edinburgh University, and a well annotated textbook to which he obviously paid much attention. On the flyleaf he has written in pencil "J. M. B. Edin. Varsity, Session 80/81" and on the title-page is the caustic comment "mostly unintelligible."

—Catalogue of Frank Hollings Bookshop, London, January 1938

Spiritual Kit for R. F. C.

SIR: Whitman of course for R. F. C., and why not also Thoreau? And Robert Frost, and the sonnets of Shakespeare and Lao Tse's *Simple Way* (translated by Old, published on Paternoster Row by Rider & Co.) I was about to add *Kamongo* by Homer Smith, but that is really an essay. How about that little *Return of the Hero* by Darrell Figgis?

This temerity almost overwhelms me; who am I to suggest books for the spiritual pilgrimage of another? But the idea of that voluntary retirement and revaluation stirred some responsive chord in me, and my mind began at once to pack a kit for him.

I. M. R.

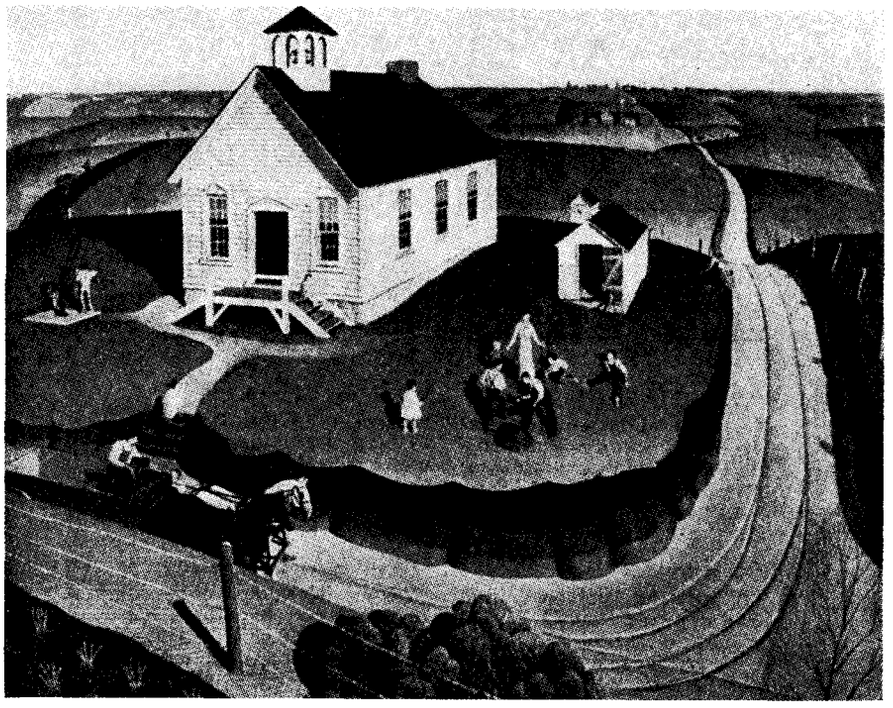
Los Angeles.

I think that a review should never be written on the same day on which the book is read. The night brings counsel; tones down dislike to a reasonable disapproval and rash fancy to intelligent appreciation; substitutes order and grasp for chaos and want of apprehension.

—George Saintsbury, *Twenty Years of Reviewing* (*Collected Essays*, Vol. III).

"Start a little rumpus, set in motion a few air currents, cause an earthquake, if possible. Only do something soon! We need you," wrote Henry Miller, an American expatriate, now dwelling in Paris, and who, although his novels are banned from this country, is regarded as one of the most significant writers of this age by such astute critics as Aldous Huxley, T. S. Eliot, Ezra Pound, William Carlos Williams, and Cyril Connolly.

Henry Miller has offered freely all of his writings, and the first issue will contain a splendid and startlingly piercing



ARBOR DAY *by Grant Wood. From* The London Studio, *courtesy Walker Galleries, New York.*

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study of the modern literary currents, titled "The Universe of Death."

—Announcement of *The Phœnix*, a quarterly to be published by the Maverick Press, Woodstock, N. Y.

Oxford Bridges the Gulf

I have been wondering whether there is any way to bridge the separation between the theoretical students of contemporary civilization and the men responsible for carrying it on . . . the gulf which at present exists between academic studies and practical affairs.

—Letter from Lord Nuffield to the Vice-Chancellor of Oxford University, October 1937.

OXFORD UNIVERSITY PAYS FOR SWINDLER—£70,000 Given in Settlement for Fraudulent Activities of Ex-Director of Research in Agricultural Engineering.

—News Dispatch in N. Y. *Times*, Feb. 2, 1938.

De Quincey and the Cook

The cook, who had an audience with him daily, received her instructions in silent awe, quite overpowered by his manner; for, had he been addressing a duchess, he could scarcely have spoken with more deference. He would couch his request in such terms as these:—"Owing to dyspepsia afflicting my system, and the possibility of any additional disarrangement of the stomach taking place, consequences incalculably distressing would arise, so much so indeed as to increase nervous irritation, and prevent me from attending to matters of overwhelming importance, if you do not remember to cut the mutton in a diagonal rather than in a longitudinal form."

—Mrs. Gordon's description of De Quincey, in her *Memoir of John Wilson*. Quoted by Horace Ainsworth Eaton in *Thomas De Quincey* (Oxford Press).

The Worldly Audience

No man can write well or justly for the stage who does not hate the worldly audience and find means to destroy it. Until it is destroyed there can be no human touch between his work and the human minds he works for. . . .

If you are courageous and sleep well you may turn softly when the lights are down in any Broadway theatre and see this monster. It is a monster of many faces which are all one face; of many bodies which are all one body. . . . It is this monster, this audience both greedy and inert, both impotent and sensual, that must be killed. It must be killed because so long as it lives in the dark silence of its seats nothing true or noble can be shown upon the stage. . . . What is necessary for the playwright who wishes to write truly and honestly and in form of art is to destroy this audience. Which means to destroy its quality of audience and change it back to men and women who will think and judge.

—Archibald MacLeish, in his Foreword to the published version of Marc Blitzstein's play, *The Cradle Will Rock* (Random House).

The Class of 1885 Sundial is a striking, dark green granite sphere, about seven feet in diameter, which stands on the south side of 116th Street. . . . Professor Harold Jacoby, '85, designed the dial so that it would indicate the time only once each day, at the moment of noon, New York standard time.

—*Guide to Columbia University*, edited by J. W. Robson.

Ely Culbertson's life ambition was never to become famous but to own the best private restaurant in America. The accomplishment of this aim required the combination of this epicurean and profound critic of the subtle intricacies of the culinary art with the major-domo genius of Raymond Modolo whom Mr. Culbertson "discovered" several years ago.

—Circular of invitation from a club-restaurant.

Descriptive Economy

When action systems involving a plurality of actors are present they may be described as groups; that is, a larger aggregate may be thought of as made up of persons as their unit. The person, in this context, becomes a member of a group. There is no reason to doubt that groups, in this sense, also have emergent properties not derivable from those of persons taken in conceptual isolation from their group membership. In any event, group properties can certainly be described without detailing all the character traits and attitudes of their members, hence further descriptive economy is achieved.

—Talcott Parsons, *The Structure of Social Action*. Chapter XIX: Tentative Methodological Implications.

There has been of late a strong current of pessimism in the thought of students of the social sciences, especially those who call themselves sociologists.

—Ibid.

THE N. Y. TIMES says:

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WILLIAM DRUMMOND—"MADRIGAL."

This life, which seems so fair,
Is like a bubble blown up in the air,
By sporting children's breath,
Who chase it everywhere,
And strive who can most motion it bequeath.
. . . It, in a thought,
As swelled from nothing doth dissolve in nought.

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The methods of the ESP experimenters *win endorsement* from leading Mathematicians!

From the NEW YORK HERALD TRIBUNE, January 16, 1938:

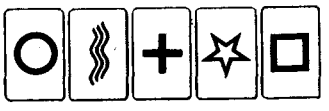
"METHODS now being used to prove the reality of extra-sensory perception — a scientific name for thought transference, clairvoyance and perhaps as yet unknown powers of the human mind—have just won important support from leading mathematicians.

"The battleground of the dispute (between the psychologists of the old school and the group experimenting with E.S.P.) was at the recent convention of the American Association for the Advancement of Science at Indianapolis.

"At the meeting of the mathematical scientists Dr. E. V. Huntington of Harvard presented a 'bombshell' paper which gave complete support to the mathematics of the extra-sensory perception group.

"A second shell was landed among the attackers when Dr. Burton H. Camp, president of the Institute of Mathematical Statistics, said: 'Assuming that the experiments have been properly performed, the statistical analysis is essentially valid.'

"Dr. Irving Langmuir, Nobel Prize winner and director of the General Electric Research Laboratories, said, after visiting Dr. Rhine's laboratories, that he had found Dr. Rhine's mathematical methods above question, his experimental technique satisfactory, and his conclusion justified by his premises and data."



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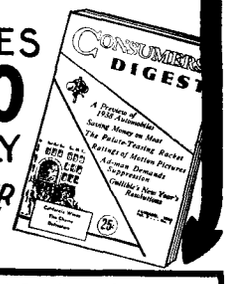

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Aristocratic Rebels

(*Continued from page 4*)

malignant devil. Yet even that enemy of God and man had friends and associates in his desolation; I am alone.

Robbed of its romantic form, there is nothing unreal in this psychology, and it is unnecessary to search out pirates or Vandal kings in order to find parallels. To an English visitor, the ex-Kaiser, at Doorn, lamented that the English no longer loved him. Dr. Burtt, in his book on the juvenile delinquent, mentions a boy of seven who drowned another boy in the Regent Canal. His reason was that neither his family nor his contemporaries showed him affection. Dr. Burtt was kind to him, and he became a respectable citizen; but no Dr. Burtt undertook the reformation of Frankenstein's monster.

It is not the psychology of the romantics that is at fault: it is their standard of values. They admire strong passions, of no matter what kind, and whatever may be their social consequences. Romantic love, especially when unfortunate, is strong enough to win their approval, but most of the strongest passions are destructive —hate and resentment and jealousy, remorse and despair, outraged pride and the fury of the unjustly oppressed, martial ardor and contempt for slaves and cowards. Hence the type of men encouraged by romanticism, especially of the Byronic variety, is violent and anti-social, an anarchic rebel or a conquering tyrant.

This outlook makes an appeal for which the reasons lies very deep in human nature and human circumstances. By self-interest man has become gregarious, but in instinct he has remained to a great extent solitary; hence the need of religion and morality to reinforce self-interest. But the habit of foregoing present satisfactions for the sake of future advantages is irksome, and when passions are roused the prudent restraints of social behavior become difficult to endure. Those who, at such times, throw them off, acquire a new energy and sense of power from the cessation of inner conflict, and, though they may come to disaster in the end, enjoy meanwhile a sense of godlike exaltation which, though known to the great mystics, can never be experienced by a merely pedestrian virtue. The solitary part of their nature reasserts itself, but if the intellect survives, the reassertion must clothe itself in myth. The mystic becomes one with God, and in the contemplation of the Infinite feels himself absolved from duty to his neighbor. The anarchic rebel does even better: he feels himself not one with God, but God. Truth and duty, which represent our subjection to matter and to our neighbors, exist no longer for the man who has become God; for others, truth is what he posits, duty what he commands. If we could all live solitary and without labor, we could all enjoy this ecstasy of independence; since we cannot, its delights are only available to madmen and dictators.

The romantic movement is, in essence, a revolt of our solitary instincts against the difficult precepts of social coöperation. Such social relations as we share with gorillas—sexual love and family affection—are spared by the earlier forms of romanticism, because their hold upon our instincts is very strong, but other restrictions imposed by society are loosened one by one. First comes the revolt against etiquette and the formal manners of courts, the "return to nature" and the belief in the simple virtues of the peasant. With this (not from observation of peasants) goes the belief that sexual relations should be based on love and an attack upon the custom of making marriage an economic contract. At the same time there is admiration for pastoral scenery as opposed to that of Fleet Street, which Dr. Johnson preferred, and there is a revolt against artificial forms in art and literature. All this had happened before Byron's time, and since it attacked nothing essential to the social structure it was not open to serious criticism.

But, under the stimulus of the French Revolution and the Napoleonic wars, revolt went deeper. The change is typified by the change in scenery. Byron no longer writes of mossy glades and sylvan rivulets; he writes of deserts and Alps, of thunderstorms and shipwrecks:

> O night
> And storm and darkness, ye are wondrous strong. . . .
> Far along,
> From peak to peak, the rattling crags among,
> Leaps the live thunder!

All this, he says, is like "the light of a dark eye in woman"; love, for him, is not gentle, but violent like a thunderstorm. What Byron says of Rousseau is applicable to himself. Rousseau was, he says,

> He who threw
> Enchantment over passion, and from woe
> Wrung overwhelming eloquence . . .
> yet he knew
> How to make madness beautiful, and cast
> O'er erring deeds and thoughts, a heavenly hue.

But there is a profound difference between the two men. Rousseau is pathetic, Byron is fierce; Rousseau's timidity is obvious, Byron's is concealed; Rousseau admires virtue provided it is simple, while Byron admires sin provided it is elemental. The difference, though it is only that between two stages in the revolt of unsocial instincts, is important, and shows the direction in which the movement is developing.

Revolt of solitary instincts against social bonds is the key to the philosophy, the politics, and the sentiments, not only of what is commonly called the romantic movement, but of its progeny down to the present day. Philosophy, under the

(*Continued on page 18*)

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Aristocratic Rebels

(*Continued from page 16*)

influence of German idealism, became solipsistic, and self-development was proclaimed as the fundamental principle of ethics. As regards sentiment, there has to be a distasteful compromise between the search for isolation and the necessities of passion and economics. D. H. Lawrence's story, "The Man Who Loved Islands," has a hero who disdained such compromise to a gradually increasing extent, and at last died of hunger and cold, but in the enjoyment of complete isolation; but this degree of consistency has not been achieved by the writers who praise solitude. The comforts of civilized life are not obtainable by a hermit, and a man who wishes to write books or produce works of art must submit to the ministrations of others if he is to survive while he does his work. In order to continue to feel solitary, he must be able to prevent those who serve him from impinging upon his ego, which is best accomplished if they are slaves. Passionate love, however, is a more difficult matter. So long as passionate lovers are regarded as in revolt against social trammels, they are admired; but in real life the love relation itself quickly becomes a social trammel, and the partner in love comes to be hated all the more vehemently if the love is strong enough to make the bond difficult to break. Hence love comes to be conceived as a battle, in which each is attempting to destroy the other by breaking through the protecting walls of his or her ego. This point of view has become familiar through the writings of Strindberg and D. H. Lawrence.

Not only passionate love, but every friendly relation to others, is only possible, to this way of feeling, in so far as the others can be regarded as a projection of one's own Self. This is feasible if the others are blood relations, and the more nearly they are related the more easily it is possible. Hence an emphasis on race, leading, as in the case of the Ptolemys, to endogamy. How this affected Byron, we know; Wagner suggests a similar sentiment in the love of Siegmund and Sieglinde. Nietzsche, though not scandalously, preferred his sister to all other women.

The principle of nationality, of which Byron was a protagonist, is an extension of the same "philosophy." A nation is assumed to be a race, descended from common ancestors, and sharing some kind of "blood-consciousness." Mazzini, who constantly found fault with the English for their failure to appreciate Byron, conceived nations as possessed of a mystical individuality, and attributed to them the kind of anarchic greatness that other romantics sought in heroic men. Liberty, for nations, came to be regarded, not only by Mazzini, but by comparatively sober statesmen, as something absolute, which, in practice, made international coöperation impossible.

Belief in blood and race is naturally associated with anti-semitism. At the same time, the romantic outlook, partly because it is aristocratic, and partly because it prefers passion to calculation, has a vehement contempt for commerce and finance. It is thus led to proclaim an opposition to capitalism which is quite different from that of the socialist who represents the interest of the proletariat, since it is an opposition based on dislike of economic preoccupations, and strengthened by the suggestion that the capitalist world is governed by Jews. This point of view is expressed by Byron on the rare occasions when he condescends to notice anything so vulgar as economic power:

> Who hold the balance of the world? Who reign
> O'er congress, whether royalist or liberal? . . . .
> Who keep the world, both Old and New, in pain
> Or Pleasure? Who make politics run glibber all?
> The shade of Buonaparte's noble daring?
> Jew Rothschild, and his fellow Christian Baring.

The verse is perhaps not very musical, but the sentiment is quite of our time.

To sum up:

The romantic movement, in which Byron was the most romantic figure, aimed at liberating human personality from the fetters of social convention and social morality. In part, these fetters were a mere useless hindrance to desirable forms of activity, for every ancient community has developed rules of behavior for which there is nothing to be said except that they are traditional. But egoistic passions, when once let loose, are not easily brought again into subjection to the needs of society. Christianity had succeeded, to some extent, in taming the ego, but economic, political, and intellectual causes stimulated revolt against the churches, and the romantic movement brought the revolt into the sphere of morals. By encouraging a new lawless ego it made social coöperation impossible, and left its disciples faced with the alternative of anarchy or despotism. Egoism at first, as in Frankenstein's monster, made men expect from others a parental tenderness; but when they discovered, with indignation, that others had their own ego, the disappointed desire for tenderness turned to hatred and violence. Man is not a solitary animal, and, so long as social life survives, self-realization cannot be the supreme principle of ethics.

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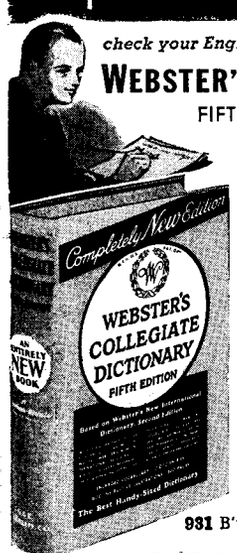

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By Garrett Mattingly

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Generalissimo

STRONG MAN OF CHINA: THE STORY OF CHIANG KAI-SHEK. By Robert Berkov. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. 1938. $3.

Reviewed by DAVID H. POPPER

CHIANG-KAI-SHEK, says Mr. Berkov, was not even accorded the honor of a citation in the 1925 edition of "Who's Who in China." In the next two years he became the country's foremost military figure; in the third, he rose to leadership in a government which could claim to speak for all of China. There, by and large, he has remained ever since. Dramatic biographical material, this; and Mr. Berkov, manager of the Shanghai Bureau of the United Press Association, has done well with it. In the clipped, spare phrases of the journalist who must keep one eye on the cable tolls, he has set down an accurate and fairly sympathetic account of the life of the Chinese generalissimo. The facts appear to be as complete as it is possible to make them with the available information. And the interpretative material, clearly labeled as such, strikes a note of sober balance in which Chiang's actions are not always unreservedly praised.

China's strong man appears in these pages as a leader of ever-increasing stature. After a Japanese military education and a year of observation in Moscow, he rapidly became the military mainstay of the Kuomintang. Astute in the high art of Chinese political maneuver, he was neither more nor less scrupulous than his associates. Opposition he crushed wherever possible, whether it came from opportunist politicians, liberals who criticized his dictatorial methods, nationalists demanding war with Japan, or communists who proposed a drastic overhaul of China's decadent, semi-feudal economic organization. But it slowly became apparent to the country and the world that Chiang, ably assisted by his wife, was carrying out a policy of modernization and centralization of authority. Leading China toward a new era he became, as the Sian affair clearly proved, indispensable to the government. Admittedly he had enforced a right-wing dictatorship supported by the Shanghai financiers, but—as in Hitler's case—his apologists were quick to condone all of his tactics because he had "unified" China.

Are they justified? How and when did Chiang's motives outgrow those of the self-seeking war lord and encompass a truly national purpose? If Chiang survives the war, will he continue to crush every advocate of the much-needed agrarian revolution? It would be asking too much of Mr. Berkov to expect him to deliver a final verdict on a contemporary whose work may still be far from complete, and he very wisely makes no attempt to do so. But, to this reviewer at least, "Strong Man of China" would have been more interesting if it were not centered so exclusively on the record of political fact. The complex tale of the struggle for power in China tends to become a bewildering congeries of telegrams, manifestoes, resignations, coups, and rebellions with little apparent significance unless they are bound together by more analytical data than Mr. Berkov has furnished. In many ways Chiang is an aloof and mystifying figure. This biography scarcely succeeds in bringing him, as an individual, closer to its readers. But it will be valuable for the solidity of its factual material. Here, one might say, are the bones of a good biography; but the flesh is still lacking.

ANOTHER LETTER FROM A SALESMAN

IN the *Saturday Review* of March 10, 1934, we printed a letter from our West Coast salesman, Ray Healy, concerning the first book by Isak Dinesen, "Seven Gothic Tales." Mr. Healy was one of the first to discover the beauty and importance of that book; his opinion has been liberally borne out by the judgment of the rest of America. We have just received another letter from Mr. Healy which we think will equally interest *Saturday Review* readers. We print it below.

Dear Bob Haas:

Remember how I wrote you four years ago en route to the Coast, concerning Isak Dinesen's *Seven Gothic Tales?* How I told you in ringing superlatives what a glorious jolt it had given me (it had to overcome a book salesman's ingrown dislike of collections of short stories)? How this then private enthusiasm of mine enabled me to get orders for tens, fifteens and twenty-fives, instead of the usual ones and threes, because I found, on reading it, that it was just as wonderful as you said it was (and you were in good form during that long ago sales conference)?

Well, here I am in Denver, and history is repeating itself. I've just finished reading Isak Dinesen's new book, *Out of Africa,* and, Bob, I think you've struck gold again!

I admit I'm amazed. If anyone had suggested to me, after reading that strange and elaborate performance, *Seven Gothic Tales,* that its author could turn personal historian, deliberately choose that part of her life which she spent on an African farm, and still be *good*—I should have said that it wasn't possible. Life in Africa would have seemed to me to be miles removed from that author's particular and exclusive sphere.

I'm tickled to death to find that I'm entirely wrong. I'm sure we'll all have to admit that Isak Dinesen belongs to that rare group of writers who can weave masterpieces out of whatever material comes to hand. Her *Out of Africa*—compounded of coffee plantations and Kenya; of natives and the Ngong hills; of the Prince of Wales and the old blind charcoal burner; of Denys, the great hunter, on whose grave lions slept; of the ancient chief, proud of his 53 children; of big game: lion, rhino, elephant, zebra, buffalo; of Lulu, the lovely pet gazelle, and of the velvet African night—has little enough to do with the "Gothic" ladies and gentlemen of whom she wrote in her first book. And yet, somehow, I think it is an even greater work. For if the former was Byzantine, the new one is pure Greek!

Cordially,

P.S. I have just received your wire informing me that the Book-of-the-Month Club has definitely announced *Out of Africa* as one of its March selections. That is as it should be. I think that every person in America who cares for books will be reading *Out of Africa* before the year is out.

Note by the Publishers: We think that Mr. Healy's enthusiasm is not misplaced. OUT OF AFRICA, by Isak Dinesen, will be published on March 1st, price $2.75. Your bookseller will be glad to book your order now. (RANDOM HOUSE.)

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The New Books

Fiction

NOBODY'S IN TOWN. By Edna Ferber. Doubleday, Doran. 1938. $2.

Miss Ferber's two short novels present two new evidences of the unimportance of the Important People in the America of today. She has contrasted the world of Mrs. Alan Career—dull, narrow, spoilt by privilege—with the gay, hard working, lively world of the people who have their way to make; and again juxtaposed the luxurious dissatisfactions of Mrs. Jared Content III, crossing the continent in a Pullman, with the desperate courage of the first Mrs. Jared Content, who crossed in a covered wagon. Returning, in method, as in theme, to "American Beauty," she presents a series of rapid flashbacks drawn from the Old America and the new—or rather from a fluid and a static America.

It is always a puzzle why any writing so awfully good as Miss Ferber's is not first rate. Here is brilliant observation of the look and sound and smell of things; intelligent analysis of what goes on in people's minds; immense skill in setting up a scene and its actors; avoidance of clinch and cliché alike. And yet the true picture is somehow more complex and less stable than Miss Ferber's picture. There is more than meets her sharp eye even in Mrs. Alan Career and Mrs. Jared Content III. Moreover, the contrast between Mrs. Career's and Mrs. Content's ideas of their own importance, and their actual worth in the world, has long ceased to matter. Fran Dodsworth dealt them the blow from which, consciously or not, they can never recover.

K. S.

MY INVINCIBLE AUNT. By Dorothea Brande. Farrar & Rinehart. 1938. $2.50.

Here is Dorothea Brande, author of "Wake Up and Live," in satirical mood showing what can happen when an elderly female takes the counsel of that book seriously. Mrs. Eben Willow, long since deserted by her husband, had been living peacefully with her schoolgirl niece in a small flat in Chicago whose quiet was broken only by the roar of the passing elevated trains and where their dearest delight was burying their noses in books, when suddenly she turned the last page of one, and announced, "Well, I guess we'd better get started." What she got started on was the sale of a cosmetic which before she was through had brought her immense wealth, and established her as the apostle of a cult based on her assurance that Kit Willow's Facial Secret brought happiness in its train. The story is told by the niece, but its heroine is the aunt.

Miss Brande is clever. She has some entertaining satire on what might be Couéism or even in part Buchmanism in her tale. She has scenes that are amusing and others that are ingenious, but many of her incidents are exaggerated and her success story incredible even in a land that has given rise to Aimée Semple MacPhersons. Miss Brande had an excellent idea but she could not make the most of it. As it is, her book is entertaining reading. It might have been much more had she been able to sustain her story as satire, not extravaganza.

A. L.

Travel

THE STORY OF TWENTIETH-CENTURY EXPLORATION. By Charles E. Key. Knopf. 1938. $3.50.

That most critical traveler who explores from his arm-chair will find hard going on the journeys outlined by this book, for though the signal adventures of each are indicated, their presentation is as drab as Gobi dust. Twentieth century exploration, howsoever aided by mechanical contrivances, is still a vivid labor. Scott's ineffectual tractors at the Pole, Byrd's and Ellsworth's planes, Sven Hedin's theodolite, Colonel Fawcett's pills, stole nothing from romance. On the contrary they enriched it by making possible the investigation of lands which until recently were considered inaccessible. Yet Mr. Key has apparently seen none of it, or has concealed it with understatement. Writing of the adventures of Scott's desperate men, he remarks: "To their surprise and mortification the explorers discovered that there was a shortage of oil," when actually that fuel shortage, as they knew, was to be one of the factors of their death.

Except for the omission of Cecil John Levien's important travels in New Guinea and Tilman's successful ascent of Nanda Devi, Mr. Key has pretty well covered the world with the explorers, mountaineers, and scientific adventurers of our time. His book would be the better for a bibliography, and more photographs and maps.

H. D.

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Trade Winds

BY P. E. G. QUERCUS

TO his considerable astonishment Old Q. found himself the other evening at the movies: he had not attended a cinema in a year and a half. It was Stevenson's *Ebb Tide* which allured him: for that overwritten and unconvincing melodrama he never had much regard, but he felt it should have film appeal. The producer put a girl into the story, but so half-heartedly that sardonic Old Q. couldn't help cackling a bit; and he took out the copy of Virgil which (in the story) one of the beachcombers always carried. The color-photography was delightful to the eye; the vitriol fumed up ugly from its carboy; the villainous cockney Huish was well cast, and the tropical scenes very taking, but the whole thing remained hokum as it was in the beginning. We were chiefly amused at the haphazard stowage of the cargo of champagne in the hold of the ship; cases of wine so casually disposed would have gone smash the first time the schooner rolled. ☞We should love to hear what Mr. Lloyd Osbourne thought of this picture; he collaborated with Stevenson in writing the story, but before it was published some of the comments were so adverse that Stevenson considered sparing L. O. the embarrassment of having his name on it. ☞We have had a very special interest in watching the cycles of opinion that have come and gone about Stevenson's work; he has been, for the past 25 years, mostly damned for the excessive artifice of his "style"; but hardly anyone ever remarks one outstanding quality of his, viz., humor.

Constance Holme

☞Our query about Constance Holme, 3 weeks ago, was deliberate, for we have been much interested in the quiet but intelligently persistent campaign of the Oxford Press for this author. We have had a remarkable response and received letters of enthusiasm from many readers of careful taste. There isn't space to quote, but to show you the kind of people who are enjoying C. H. we take the liberty to list a few:—Josephine Adams Rathbone, School of Library Science, Pratt Institute, Brooklyn; Grace Pepperdine, Secretary to the President, Stephens College, Columbia, Missouri; Mable Powell, Librarian Lake Forest College; Mrs. John Livingston Lowes, Cambridge, Mass.; Sara B. Field, Longmeadow, Mass.; E. R. Ervin, Arlington, Mass.; Elizabeth Wood, Germantown Friends' School, Philadelphia; Frances W. Hadley, Milwaukee-Downer College, Wisconsin; Vernon O. Clapp, Hillier, Ontario; Mrs. Frederick J. Hokin, Hueneme, Calif.; Dorothy M. Goodfellow, Pittsburgh, Pa. All these have very generously written to us of their pleasure in Constance Holme's novels. ☞So it remains true that there is no pleasure so keen as discovering a book to one's taste—except the succeeding pleasure of passing it along. ☞Besides the familiar World's Classics edition, the Oxford Press has now put *The Lonely Plough, The Old Road from Spain, The Trumpet in the Dust, Crump Folk Going Home,* and *The Splendid Fairing* in large type 12 mo. editions (with picture jackets) at $1.50 each.

☞*We Americans: A Study of Cleavage in an American City,* by Elin L. Anderson (Harvard Univ. Press) has been awarded the John Anisfield prize of $1000, awarded annually for studies in the field of racial relationships. ☞*We Americans* is described as a study of the "ethnic composition of the city of Burlington, Vermont." ☞Speaking of racial oddities, Richard Ellis the tasteful and zealous designer of the Haddon Press in Camden, N. J., has done a seemly job in a big illustrated book about *Pennsylvania-German Illuminated MSS.,* by Henry S. Borneman. Wish we could reproduce some of the delightful Pennsy-Dutch bookplates and bookmarks, but they run to reds and yellows which don't come out well in black-and-white.

The Criminal Record

The Saturday Review's Guide to Detective Fiction

Title and Author	*Crime, Place, Sleuth*	*Summing Up*	*Verdict*
DEATH AT THE MANOR *M. E. Corne* (M. S. Mill: $2.)	Substitute "beautician" at wealthy home sees clients perish under hair-drier and frantically calls for leisurely sleuth MacIntyre.	Despite somewhat artificial set-up of yarn, oddity of killer's device and "Mac's" slow but sure methods are enjoyable.	Entertaining
DOG EAT DOG *Whitman Chambers* (Crime Club: $2.)	Private Investigator Pierre O'Brien braves ire of king-pin gangster to solve three West-Coast killings.	Suavely hard boiled with neat twists to rather translucent plot, staccato dialogue, and hair-trigger action.	Satisfactory
THE HOUSE IN THE HILLS *Laurence W. Meynell* (Harpers: $2.)	Princess masquerading as movie actress abducted but Baikie and young asst. save her for throne.	Soupçon Pris. of Zenda, whiff of Graustark, moorland bits à la Buchan, and sentimental seasoning to taste.	Potpourri

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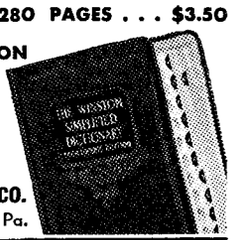

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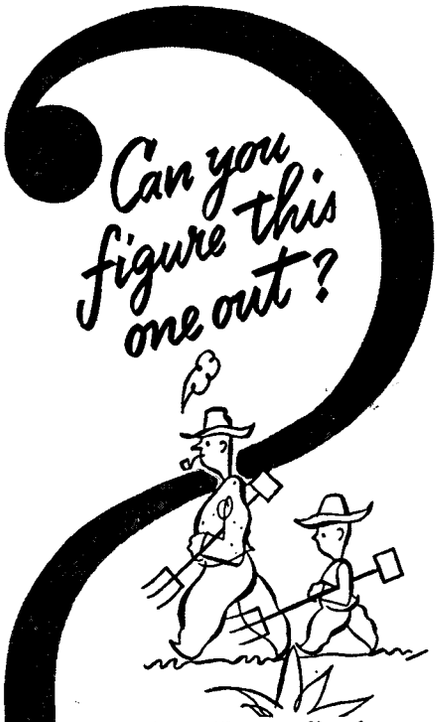

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Double-Crostics: No. 203

By ELIZABETH S. KINGSLEY

■	1-Y	2-W	3-Q	■	4-R	5-Q	6-U	7-S	■	8-J	9-V	10-G	■	11-U	12-S	13-E
14-L	15-C	■	16-D	17-H	■	18-N	19-Q	20-M	21-L	22-U	■	23-J	24-Y	25-L	26-D	27-C
■	28-E	29-C	■	30-E	31-H	■	32-J	33-Y	■	34-D	35-H	36-A	37-O	■	38-N	39-E
40-J	41-T	■	42-A	43-S	■	44-H	45-K	46-D	■	47-L	48-V	49-O	50-U	51-P	52-B	■
53-N	54-F	55-U	56-M	57-I	58-K	■	59-B	60-R	61-D	■	62-O	63-F	64-Y	65-U	66-K	■
67-K	68-S	■	69-C	70-X	71-B	72-J	73-S	74-W	75-K	■	76-B	77-J	78-D	79-T	■	80-F
81-R	82-E	83-I	■	84-E	85-A	86-Q	■	87-O	88-N	■	89-R	90-U	91-J	■	92-S	93-N
94-Y	95-J	96-W	97-I	■	98-G	99-I	100-T	■	101-K	102-R	■	103-G	104-R	105-Y	106-V	107-U
108-F	109-M	■	110-R	111-Q	112-P	■	113-E	114-H	115-G	116-D	■	117-M	118-L	119-T	120-F	121-X
122-G	123-W	■	124-B	125-E	126-D	■	127-Y	128-C	129-X	■	130-Y	131-R	132-M	133-O	134-P	135-K
■	136-U	137-T	138-R	■	139-R	140-V	141-U	■	142-E	143-S	144-A	145-G	■	146-A	147-D	148-O
■	149-S	150-T	151-U	152-B	■	153-X	154-Y	155-M	156-F	157-O	158-K	159-C	160-L	161-X	■	162-Y
163-K	164-P	165-D	■	166-U	167-K	■	168-H	169-N	170-K	171-B	172-X	173-L	■	■	■	■

DIRECTIONS

To solve this puzzle, you must guess twenty-five words, the definitions of which are given in the column headed DEFINITIONS. The letters in each word to be guessed are numbered. These numbers appear under the dashes in the column headed WORDS. There is a dash for each letter in the required word. The key letters in the squares are for convenience, indicating to which word in the definitions each letter in the diagram belongs. When you have guessed a word, fill it in on the dashes; then write each letter in the correspondingly numbered square on the puzzle diagram. When the squares are all filled in you will find (by reading from left to right) a quotation from a famous author. Reading up and down the letters mean nothing. The black squares indicate ends of words: therefore words do not necessarily end at the right side of the diagram.

When the column headed WORDS is filled in, the initial letters spell the name of the author and the title of the piece from which the quotation has been taken. Authority for spelling and definitions is Webster's New International Dictionary.

The solution of last week's *Double-Crostic* will be found on page 14 of this issue.

DEFINITIONS

A. Egyptian epithet of Zeus.
B. One wanting intelligence.
C. Muddled.
D. Gelatin pudding containing chestnuts.
E. Mythical king-inventor of beer.
F. Very pleasing (colloq.).
G. Steep descent.
H. Timely warning (comp.).
I. Gull-like bird of genus Sterna.
J. Eternity (German).
K. Play by Ibsen.
L. Quell; discomfit.
M. Cheap, gaudy ornamentation.
N. Proposals.
O. Unit for measuring loudness of sounds.
P. Earth goddess (Nibelungen).
Q. From a higher to a lower position (poetic).
R. Book by Alexander Smith.
S. Furnished; yielded.
T. Title of romance by Fouqué.
U. Russian composer (1840-1893).
V. Wind instrument.
W. Belonging to some person or thing (possess.).
X. Slack.
Y. Display medium (2 words).

WORDS

A.	146	36	144	42	85							
B.	52	124	71	152	76	171	59					
C.	128	69	15	159	29	27						
D.	147	61	116	34	46	26	78	16	126	165		
E.	142	84	113	28	13	30	125	39	82			
F.	80	63	156	120	108	54						
G.	10	115	103	98	122	145						
H.	44	114	168	35	17	31						
I.	83	57	97	99								
J.	77	23	32	95	72	91	40	8				
K.	170	67	75	101	163	135	66	45	167	158	58	
L.	47	118	25	160	14	21	173					
M.	56	155	20	117	109	132						
N.	93	88	18	169	38	53						
O.	148	37	49	87	62	157	133					
P.	134	164	112	51								
Q.	19	86	5	3	111							
R.	138	102	131	110	139	89	60	81	104	4		
S.	143	43	68	12	7	92	73	149				
T.	119	137	100	150	41	79						
U.	166	141	151	90	136	50	65	6	11	55	107	22
V.	9	48	140	106								
W.	2	74	96	123								
X.	161	121	129	70	153	172						
Y.	127	1	24	130	162	105	33	94	64	154		

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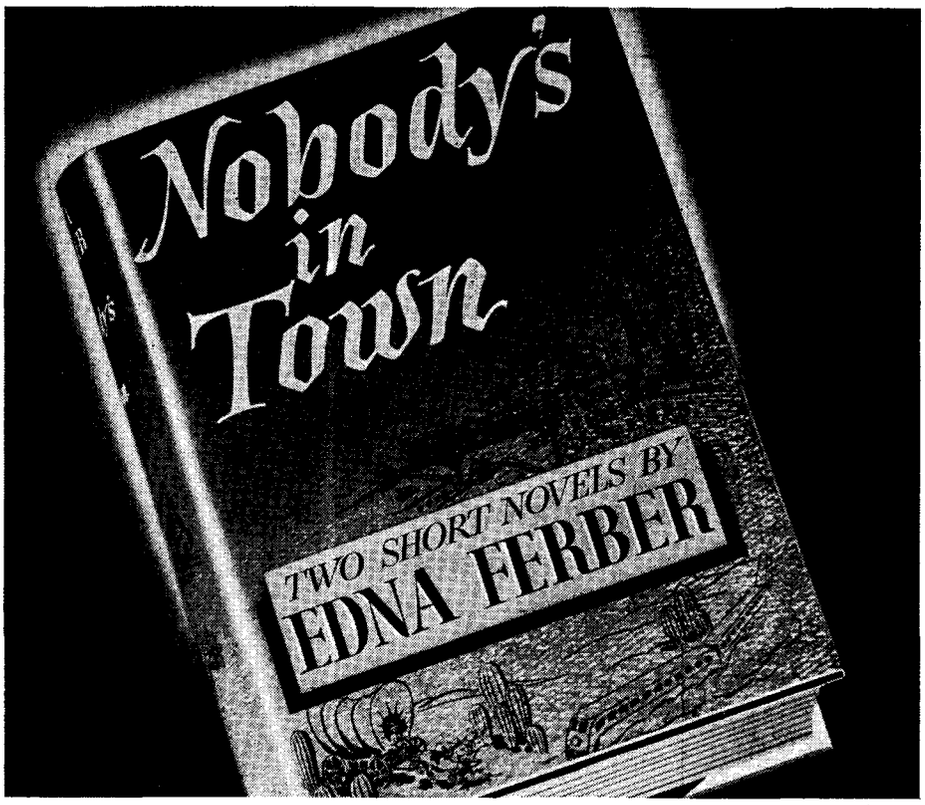

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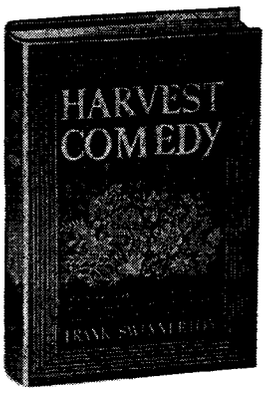

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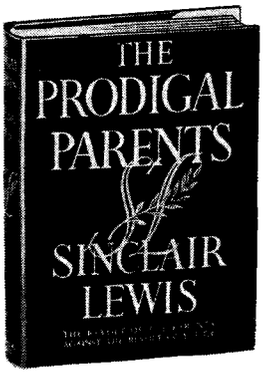

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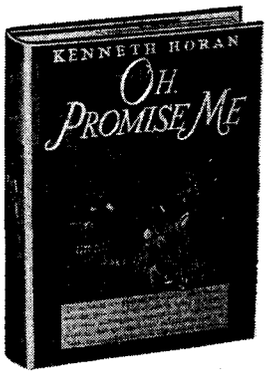

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